

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
RISE, PROGRESS, AND ESTABLISHMENT,
OF THE
INDEPENDENCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

INCLUDING
AN ACCOUNT OF THE LATE WAR,
AND OF THE
THIRTEEN COLONIES,
FROM THEIR ORIGIN TO THAT PERIOD.

By WILLIAM GORDON, D.D.

QUID VERUM **** CURO, ET ROGO, ET OMNIS IN HOC SUM,
HORAT. i Ep. i Lib.

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ERRATA beside those at the End of the Volume.

Page 361, line 12, read were—last line read straits. P. 365, last line and first of 366, read on the special business of examining the constitution agreed upon by the *Massachusetts* convention. P. 407, last line, read and two which had suffered less, into *Cadiz*.



THE
RISE, PROGRESS, AND CONCLUSION
OF THE
NORTH AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

LETTER I.

Roxbury, Jan. 29, 1778.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE military operations in Pennsylvania, are to be the subjects of our immediate attention. About a fortnight after the German-town battle on the 19th of October, the royal army under the command of Sir William Howe removed to Philadelphia.

Measures being concerted between the general and admiral for clearing the Delaware of its obstructions, the former ordered batteries to be erected on the western or Pennsylvania shore, to assist in dislodging the Americans from Mud-island. He also detached a strong body of Hessians across the river, who were to march down and reduce the fort at Red-bank, while the ships and batteries on the other side were to attack Mud-island. Count Donop commanded the detachment, consisting of three battalions of grenadiers and the regiment of Mirback, beside light infantry and chasseurs. The Ame-

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ricans

1777. ricans were about 400 under col. Christopher Greene of
Oa. Rhode Island. When near enough, the count sent a
22. flag and demanded a surrender of the fort in the most
peremptory terms. The colonel concealed the greatest
part of his men, so that the officer with the flag thought
the garrison very small. Greene answered—"I shall
defend the fort to the last extremity." Donop attacked
the intrenchments, and after a sharp action carried an
extensive outwork, not half completed; but in the body
of the redoubt, which afforded a better covering, the
defence was equally vigorous and far more successful.
Here indeed the Americans meant to risk the fate of the
fort, as they would have the greatest advantage of the
assailants. The Count was mortally wounded and taken
prisoner. Several of his best officers were killed or dis-
abled; and the Hessians, after a desperate engagement,
were repulsed. The second in command being also
dangerously wounded, the detachment was brought off
by lieut. col. Linning. It suffered not only in the assault
but in the approach to and retreat from the fort, by the
fire of the American galleys and floating batteries. The
whole loss was probably not less than 4 or 500 men.
Congress have since resolved to present col. Greene with
an elegant sword. The men of war and frigates des-
tined for the attack of Mud-island alias Fort Mifflin,
were equally unfortunate. The ships could not bring
their fire to bear with any great effect upon the works.
The extraordinary defences with which the free course of
the river had been intercepted, had affected its bed, and
altered its known and natural channel. By this mean
the Augusta man of war and Merlin sloop were ground-
ed so fast, that there was no possibility of getting them
off.

off. The *Augusta* while engaged took fire, and the ¹⁷⁷⁷ *Merlin* was hastily evacuated. The greater part of the officers and crew of the *Augusta* were saved; but the second lieutenant, chaplain, gunner, and no inconsiderable number of the common men perished. Notwithstanding this ill success, the British commanders prosecuted with vigor the business of opening the navigation. Nor were the Americans idle; for they left nothing undone to strengthen their defences.

General Washington gave the following state of his ²⁹ army,—“Our whole force by the last returns is 8313 continental troops; and 2717 militia, rank and file, fit for duty: beside the garrison of Mud-island amounting to 300 continentals, of Red-bank 350, and a detachment of militia (on the 26th to reinforce it) 300; and the troops on the other side of Schuylkill 500, making together 1450.” Thus it appears, that his whole strength was 12,480 men. Sir W. Howe’s probably amounted to more than 10,000 rank and file, present and fit for duty. It had received no increase worth mentioning from among the inhabitants of Pennsylvania or the neighbouring states, though large promises had been made (by some sanguine gentlemen who had joined him) that thousands of loyal subjects would repair to the royal standard as soon as it should make its appearance in Pennsylvania. The American commander in chief certainly supposed, that general Howe’s force exceeded his own in number, for, on the 13th of November, he wrote,—“The army which I have had under my immediate command has not, at any one time since gen. Howe’s landing at the head of Elk, been equal in point of numbers to his. In ascertaining this, I do not confine myself to conti-

1777. mental troops, but comprehend militia. I was left to fight two battles, in order if possible to save Philadelphia, with less numbers than composed the army of my antagonist, whilst the world has given us at least double. This, though mortifying in some points of view, I have been obliged to encourage; because next to being strong, it is best to be thought so by the enemy, and to this cause principally, I think, is to be attributed the slow movements of Howe." The case was different in the northern department. There the states of New York and New England resolving to crush Burgoyne, continued pouring in their troops till the surrender of his army. Had the same spirit pervaded the people of Pennsylvania and the neighbouring states, Washington might, before the date of his letter, had Howe nearly in the same situation with Burgoyne. The Pennsylvania militia were said to be 30,000, but about 3000 was the highest number brought into the field. In the estimation of some New England gentlemen, "the peasants of that country are extremely ignorant and brutish. They are a mixture of high and low Dutch, and so exceeding illiterate, that few of them can read, and scarce any can write. They have no other ideas of liberty or slavery, than as it affects their property; and it is immaterial to them, whether Great Britain or America prevails, so that they may be exempted from paying their proportion of the expences of the war. Ignorance is the high road to slavery."

While the British were entirely occupied in possessing the city of Philadelphia, gen. Washington sent off lieutenant-col. Samuel Smith of the Maryland line, with 200 men, who were to proceed and possess themselves of Mud-island.

By quick marches he arrived with his party at the lower 1777. ferry, and with difficulty threw himself into the fort, which he found in a wretched condition, without ammunition, provision or stores, garrisoned by about thirty militia. He had with him two excellent officers of artillery, to whom he assigned fifty of his best men, who were trained to the guns. The colonel, with commodore Hazlewood and capt. Robinson, a brave naval officer, visited Province-island, principally under water, the banks having been cut by order. The colonel pointed out two dry places, where the enemy might erect works, the nearest about 4 or 500 yards from that side of the American works where the defences were only palisades, one gun and two weak block-houses. With great labor he undertook to erect a two gun battery without the fort, so as to make a cross fire on the spot. He had not finished, before the enemy took possession of the ground he most dreaded; but by a well directed fire from the block-house batteries and gallies, ere they had a gun ready, the Americans wounded the commander, and the party delivered themselves up prisoners. While these were removing, another party came down from the heights, and deceiving major Ballard with offers of submission, till too near to be prevented, repossessed themselves of the battery, from whence they annoyed the garrison very much. Many of the men and officers having sickened through the unhealthiness of the place, the colonel was reinforced by the first Virginia regiment of about 120 men. The enemy having got up part of the chevaux de Frize, brought in their shipping, and made an attack as above related. One American Squadron of four gallies behaved well, the others kept aloof, the

1777. commodore being at the distance of more than a mile. The British, after that unsuccessful attack, applied themselves to the strengthening of their batteries on shore, and nightly sent up their boats with provision to the city, by the passage between Mud and Province islands, while the commodore absolutely refused attempting to prevent them, upon the plea that a single bomb from the enemy would destroy any of his galleys. There came three or four days of uncommon high tides, which drowned some of the British, and hindered their working any of their guns, except one howitzer. This opportunity of annoying them considerably, was not duly improved by the galleys. On the decrease of the tides, the British renewed their fire with double vigor, and soon destroyed the American two gun battery, blew up the north-west block-house and laboratory, and compelled the garrison to seek cover in the fort. Col. Smith, after having defended it from the latter end of September, till the 11th of November, a few days excepted, was wounded by a spent cannon shot, and greatly bruised by the bricks it threw on him, which occasioned his removal to the main. His fatigues and dangers had been extreme; and he supported them with uncommon patience and fortitude. Upon his removal the command devolved on lieut. col. Russel of the Connecticut line, but he being exhausted with fatigue, and totally destitute of health, requested to be recalled. Upon the 12th, the commander in chief signified his orders to the commanding general on the Jersey side, who directed all the military operations below Philadelphia, "to defend Mud-island, as long as possible, without sacrificing the garrison." The commanding general, for insuperable reasons,

reasons, could not detach an officer in rotation. Major 1777 Thayer, of the Rhode Island line, presented himself a volunteer, and was appointed.

The British having every thing in readiness, the Isis and Somerset men of war pass up the east channel to attack the works on Mud-island in front; several frigates draw up against an American fort newly erected on the Jersey side, situated so as to flank the men of war in their station; and two armed vessels, the Vigilant, an East Indiaman cut down to a battery of 20 twenty-four pounders on one side, and a hulk with 3 twenty-four pounders, successfully make their way through a narrow channel on the western side, a matter of the greatest importance, as these two vessels, in concert with the batteries on Province-island, enfilade the principal works on Mud-island. On the morning of the 15th, the whole British fire is displayed from their land batteries, and their shipping in the river. The small garrison of 300 men sustain and repel the shock with astonishing intrepidity, for several hours, assisted by the American galleys and the batteries on the Jersey shore. By the middle of the day their defences are levelled with the common mud, and the officers and men expect each other's fate, in the midst of carnage. During the day more than 1030 discharges of cannon, from thirty-two to twelve pounders, are made in twenty minutes, from the batteries and shipping of both sides. Early in the evening, major Thayer sends all his garrison ashore, excepting forty, with whom he remains, braving all danger. At twelve at night, many of the military stores having been previously sent away, the barracks are fired, when

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1777. the major and his few brave companions quit, and cross to Red-bank*.

In this affair there were near two hundred and fifty of the garrison killed and wounded. Three councils of war had been called upon the subject of relieving Fort Mifflin; and in the last, it was concluded to attempt it, though it was believed that a general engagement would be the consequence: this however the Americans did not regard, the ground being such as they wished, if called to fight the enemy. The night before the attempt could be made, the fort was of necessity evacuated. The congress, before this event, had voted lieut. col. Smith an elegant sword for the gallant defence he had made on the 22d of October; but as they had voted at the same time, the like to commodore Hazlewood, commander of the naval force in the Delaware, he did not think himself much honored by it, and declined the present. Men of courage and judgment pronounce the commodore a poltron; and say that if all the officers in the marine department had behaved with equal bravery to what the land officers did, the fort would not have been taken. Several of them are reckoned to have acted a dastardly part. It was observed of Hazlewood, that he was fond of long shot, and was shy of coming to close quarters. The reduction of the fort secured to the British the safe opportunity of sending up their small craft, at the back of the island, to the Schuylkill with provisions and stores, by day as well as by night.

* See James M. Varnum's letter of August the second, 1786, in the Providence Gazette, who was the commanding general on the Jersey side.

On the 18th at night, lord Cornwallis marched with 1777. a considerable force, and the next day crossed the Delaware, in his way to Red-bank, which the Americans abandoned, leaving behind them their artillery and a considerable quantity of cannon-ball. Some continental generals were appointed to give their opinion upon the spot to col. Greene. They favored an evacuation, and wished that he would join them. He answered, "I shall follow your direction either to evacuate or defend the fort. I know what we have done, when the works were not half completed. Now they are finished, and I am not afraid." But the direction was to evacuate, which was complied with, though with manifest reluctance. The marquis de la Fayette accompanied gen. Greene into Jersey, though his wound was not yet healed; and on the 25th of November, with only a handful of Nov. 25. riflemen and militia, attacked a party of Hessians and British grenadiers, which he obliged to retreat. After this, congress resolved that he should take the command of a division in the army.

The American shipping having now lost all protection, several of the gallies and other armed vessels, took the advantage of a favorable night, kept close in with the Jersey shore, passed the batteries of Philadelphia, and escaped to places of security higher up. The remaining seventeen finding an escape impracticable, were abandoned by the crews and fired. The British however confessed, that the long and unexpected opposition which they received from Red-bank and Mud-island, broke in upon their plans for the remainder of the campaign.

A de-

1777. A detachment from the northern army, of some of the New England brigades, was ordered down to join the American commander in chief. When arrived at Fish-kill a number of the New Hampshire troops, to the amount of near 200, mutinied at the barracks on the evening of November the 4th, paraded with their arms, and began to march off in order. The exertions of the officers suppressed them, but capt. Beall was shot and mortally wounded; he killed however the soldier that shot him. The cry was, "We have no money, nor breeches, and will not cross the river till we have received these articles." It was feared that some officers were at the bottom of the mutiny. As it was soon quelled without infecting the other troops, the whole marched on, till they joined gen. Washington; who being thus reinforced, advanced to White Marsh, within 14 miles of Philadelphia, and encamped in a strong position. Sir W. Howe, hoping that he meant to hazard a battle for the recovery of Philadelphia, or that some part of his camp was vulnerable, and would admit of a successful impression, marched the army from the city on the night of the 4th of December. The day before, gen. Greene gave this distressing picture of the American army to the commander in chief—"One half of our troops are without breeches, shoes and stockings; and some thousands without blankets. Last winter's campaign will confirm this truth, that unless men are well clothed, they must fall a sacrifice to the severity of the weather, when exposed to the hardships of a winter's campaign." Howe's further proceedings take in Washington's words, written on the 10th—"I had reason to expect

expect Howe was preparing to give us a general action. 1777-
On Friday morning his troops appeared on Chesnut-hill; at night they changed their ground. On Sunday from every appearance, there was reason to apprehend an action. About sun set, after various marches and counter-marches, they halted, and I still supposed they would attack us in the night, or early the next morning, but in this I was mistaken. On Monday afternoon they filed off, and marched toward Philadelphia. Their loss in skirmishing was not inconsiderable. I sincerely wish they had made an attack, the issue would in all probability have been happy for us. Policy forbade our quitting our posts to attack them."

The American army marched from White Marsh to Sweed's Ford. The want of clothing was so extreme, that gen. Washington was under the absolute necessity of granting warrants to different officers to impress what the holders would not willingly part with, agreeable to the powers with which congress had invested him. He removed with the troops, on the 19th, to Valley-forge, where they hutted, about sixteen miles from Philadelphia. When the mode of hutting was first proposed, some treated the idea as ridiculous, few thought it practicable, and all were surprised at the facility with which it was executed. It was certainly a considerable exertion for the remnant of an army, exhausted and worn down, by the severity of a long and rather unsuccessful campaign, to sit down in a wood, and in the latter end of December to begin to build themselves huts. Through the want of shoes and stockings, and the hard frozen ground, you might have tracked the army from White Marsh

1777. Marsh to Valley-forge by the blood of their feet*. The taking of this position was highly requisite. Had the army retired to the towns in the interior parts of the state, a large tract of fertile country would have been exposed to ravage and ruin; and they must have distressed in a peculiar manner the virtuous citizens from Philadelphia, who had fled thither for refuge.

Sir W. Howe has plainly the advantage of the American general, but nothing to boast of; for all the fruits derived from his various manœuvrings and engagements, from the beginning to the close of the campaign, amount to little beside good winter-quarters for his army in Philadelphia, while the troops possess no more of the adjacent country than what their arms immediately command. Certain persons indeed are permitted to carry provisions into the city; that so upon their return they may supply the Americans with intelligence. These must submit to spare a little for such purposes, though in the utmost want themselves. At one time the army remained quiet four days together, without bread; on the fifth two regiments refused to do duty upon the account; but the prudence and persuasion of the commander in chief restored order. To a similar event, there was probably an allusion, in the following extract from his letter of the 23d—“This brought forth the only commissary in the purchasing line in this camp, and with him this melancholy alarming truth, that he had not a single hoof of any kind to slaughter, and not more than twenty-five barrels of flour, and could not tell when to expect any.—The present commissaries are

Dec.
23.

* General Washington mentioned it to me, when at his table, June 3, 1784.

by no means equal to the execution of the office, or the 1777.
disaffection of the people is past all belief. The change
in that department took place contrary to my judgment,
and the consequences thereof were predicted.—No man
ever had his measures more impeded than I have, by
every department of the army. Since the month of
July we have had no assistance from the quarter master
general, and to want of assistance from this department
the commissary general charges great part of his defi-
ciency. We have by a field return this day, no less than
2898 men in camp unfit for duty, because they are
barefoot and otherwise naked.—Our whole strength in
continental troops, (including the eastern brigades, which
have joined us since the surrender of Burgoyne) exclu-
sive of the Maryland troops sent to Wilmington, is no
more than 8200 in camp fit for duty.—Since the fourth
our number fit, through hardships, particularly on ac-
count of blankets (numbers have been, and still are
obliged to sit up all night by fires, instead of taking
comfortable rest in a common way) have decreased near
two thousand men.—Upon the ground of safety and po-
licy, I am obliged to conceal the true state of the army
from public view, and thereby expose myself to detrac-
tion and calumny.—There is as much to be done in
preparing for a campaign, as in the active part of it.”
Gen. Mifflin in a letter of October the eighth, had re-
presented to congress, that his health was so much im-
paired, and the probability of a recovery so distant, that
he thought it his duty to return to them their commis-
sions to him of major general and quarter master ge-
neral. While the army was suffering as above related for
want of shoes, &c. hogsheds of shoes, stockings and
clothing,

1777. clothing, were at different places, upon the road and in the woods, lying and perishing, for want of teams, and proper management, and money to pay the teamsters.

Nothing great has happened in the neighbourhood of New York, since the return of the troops under gen. Vaughan from their expedition up the North river: but it may not displease you to read the following particulars. On the 18th of November, gen. Tryon sent about 100 men under capt. Emmerick to burn some houses, on Phillips's manor, within about four miles of gen. Parsons's guards. They effected it with circumstances of barbarity, stripping the clothing off the women and children, and turning them almost naked into the streets in a most severely cold night. The men were made prisoners, and led with halters about their necks, with no other clothes than their shirts and breeches, in triumph to the British lines. A few days after Parsons wrote to Tryon upon the occasion, expostulating with him upon the business, and told him, That he could destroy the houses and buildings of col. Phillips and those belonging to the Delancey family, each as near their lines as the buildings destroyed were to his guards; that notwithstanding all their vigilance, the destruction could not be prevented; and that it was not fear or want of opportunity, but a sense of the injustice and savageness of such a line of conduct, that had hitherto saved the buildings. Tryon answered from Kingsbridge on the 23d, and said among other things, "Sir, could I possibly conceive myself accountable to any revolted subjects of the king of Great Britain, I might answer your letter of yesterday respecting the conduct of capt. Emmerick's party upon the taking of Peter and Cornelius

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Vantassel. As much as I abhor every principle of in-^{1777.}humanity or ungenerous conduct, I should, were I in more authority, burn every committee man's house within my reach, as I deem them the wicked instruments of the continued calamities of this country; and in order the sooner to purge this colony of them, I am willing to give twenty silver dollars for every acting committee man who shall be delivered up to the king's troops." The stinging repartee made to this letter was contained in an expedition undertaken immediately after to Greenwich, about three miles from New York, where a small party arrived in the evening, advanced to Mr. Oliver Delancey's house, secured the sentry, dismissed a few ladies in peace, though rather hastily, made a few men prisoners, burnt the house, occasioned the firing of the alarm guns in New York, then crossed the river and got safe off.

New York reminds me of the American prisoners confined in that city, and in Philadelphia. In the course of letters that passed between gens. Howe and Washington, the former alluded to the cases of royal prisoners of war being injuriously and unjustifiably loaded with irons. The latter, in one of November the 14th, says—"If there is a single instance of a prisoner of war being in irons, I am ignorant of it, nor can I find on the most minute inquiry, that there is the least foundation for the charge. I wish you to particularize the cases you allude to, that relief may be had, if the complaints are well-founded. Now we are upon the subject of grievances, I am constrained to observe, that I have a variety of accounts, not only from prisoners who have made their escape, but from persons who have left Philadelphia,

1777. phia, that our private soldiers in your hands, are treated in a manner shocking to humanity, and that many of them must have perished through hunger, had it not been for the charitable contributions of the inhabitants. It is added in aggravation, that this treatment is to oblige them to enlist in the corps you are raising. I must also remonstrate against the cruel treatment and confinement of our officers. This I am informed is not only the case of those in Philadelphia, but of many in New York. Many of the cruelties exercised toward prisoners are said to proceed from the inhumanity of Mr. Cunningham, provost martial, without your knowledge or approbation. I transmit the depositions of two persons of reputation, who are come from Philadelphia, respecting the treatment they received. I will not comment upon the subject. It is too painful." Howe particularized by saying—"Major Stockdon, and other officers of the New Jersey volunteers, were put in irons at Princeton. The major and captain of that regiment were marched out of that place, under guard and hand-cuffed together." Washington rejoined—"When major Stockdon was first captured, I believe that he and one or two officers taken with him, suffered the treatment which you mention. This was without my privity or consent; as soon as I was apprized of it, relief was ordered. But surely this event, which happened so long ago, will not authorize the charges in your letter of the sixth."

On the 10th of December, all the American officers were removed from the ships back to Long-island, from whence they had been taken and carried on board. The inhabitants received them in again, upon Mr. Lewis Pentard's engaging to pay for them at the rate of two hard

hard dollars per week. There were 250 of them. He 1777 acted for Mr. Boudinot. Had he not engaged, their former board not having been paid for, they would have been returned to the ships. All the privates there have been clothed by him. He observed when informing his principal of these particulars—"The privates should have a little fresh beef, especially the convalescents, who on leaving the hospitals are put to salt meat, and relapse immediately; the consequence of which is, they are dying very fast. I advise sending in weekly a quantity of fresh provision for their consumption."

The board of war had a conference with Mr. Boudinot, the commissary general of prisoners, at York Town on the 21st of December, and after having carefully examined the evidences produced by him, agreed upon reporting, beside other matters—"That there are about 900 privates, and 300 officers in the city of New York, and about 500 privates and 50 officers in Philadelphia:—That the privates in New York have been crowded all summer in sugar houses, and the officers boarded on Long-island, except about 30, who have been confined in the provost guard and in the most loathsome jails:—That since the beginning of October all these prisoners, both officers and privates, have been confined in prison ships, or the provost:—That the privates in Philadelphia have been kept in two public jails, and the officers in the state house:—That, from the best evidence which the nature of the subject will admit of, the general allowance of prisoners at most does not exceed four ounces of meat, and as much bread (often so damaged as not to be eatable) per day, and often much less, though the professed allowance is from eight to ten ounces:—

1777. That it has been a common practice with the enemy, on a prisoner's being first captured, to keep him three, four, or even five days without a morsel of provisions of any kind, and then to tempt him to enlist to save his life;— That there are numerous instances of prisoners of war perishing in all the agonies of hunger from their severe treatment:— That being generally stripped of what clothes they have when taken, they have suffered greatly for the want thereof during their confinement." This ill treatment of the American prisoners, though it shortens the lives of numbers, tends only to lengthen the war, by irritating the people at large, among whom it is quickly reported.

Let us now quit the military for the civil department, though with respect to dates we must be retrograde.

Oct.
29.

On Wednesday October the 29th, Mr. president Hancock closed the business of the morning by taking leave of congress in the following speech—" Gentlemen, Friday last completed two years and five months since you did me the honor of electing me to fill this chair. As I could never flatter myself your choice proceeded from any idea of my abilities, but rather from a partial opinion of my attachment to the liberties of America, I felt myself under the strongest obligations to discharge the duties of the office, and I accepted the appointment with the firmest resolution to go through the business annexed to it in the best manner I was able. Every argument conspired to make me exert myself, and I endeavoured by industry and attention to make up for every other deficiency.—As to my conduct both in and out of congress in the execution of your business, it is improper for me to say any thing. You are the best judges.

judges. But I think I shall be forgiven, if I say I have spared no pains, expence, or labor, to gratify your wishes, and to accomplish the views of congress.—My health being much impaired, I find some relaxation absolutely necessary, after such constant application; I must therefore request your indulgence for leave of absence for two months.—But I cannot take my departure, gentlemen, without expressing my thanks for the civility and politeness I have experienced from you. It is impossible to mention this without a heartfelt pleasure.—If in the course of so long a period as I have had the honor to fill this chair, any expressions may have dropped from me that may have given the least offence to any member, as it was not intentional, so I hope his candor will pass it over.—May every happiness, gentlemen, attend you both as members of this house and as individuals; and I pray Heaven, that unanimity and perseverance may go hand in hand in this house; and that every thing which may tend to distract or divide your councils, may be for ever banished.”

The congress in the afternoon ordered, “That the secretary wait on the president, and request him to furnish the house with a copy of the speech with which he took leave of congress.” When the secretary laid it before them, the Friday following, one of the New York delegates introduced an answer he had prepared, which breathed too much the soothing air of servility, and possessed too small a portion of republican independency, and was therefore rejected. But it was moved, “That the thanks of congress be presented to John Hancock, esq; for the unremitted attention and steady impartiality which he has manifested in discharge of the

1777 various duties of his office as president since his election to the chair on the 24th day of May 1775." Previous to the determination of this motion, it was moved, "to resolve as the opinion of congress, that it is improper to thank any president for the discharge of the duties of that office." The South Carolina delegates being divided, and the New Jersey delegate not voting, the states were equally divided, four and four. The question being then put on the first motion, and these delegates voting in the affirmative, it was accordingly carried six against four.

When Mr. Hancock was first elected in consequence of Mr. Peyton Randolph's being under a necessity of returning to Virginia, it was expected that as soon as the latter repaired again to congress, the former would resign. Of this he was reminded by one of his Massachusetts brethren, when Mr. Randolph got back, but the charms of presidency made him deaf to the private advice of his colleague, and no one could with propriety move for his removal that the other might be restored. In the early stage of his presidency he acted upon republican principles; but afterward he inclined to the aristocracy of the New York delegates, connected himself with them, and became their favorite. He at length fell in so fully with their plans, that a Rhode Island delegate lectured him upon it, and told him that he had forgotten the errand on which he was sent to congress, and advised him to return to his constituents. This versatility in political sentiments, though it chagrined, did not surprise his Massachusetts brethren; for they remembered, that at a certain period, he was upon the point of joining the tory club at Boston, (as it was called)

called) whereby he alarmed the liberty party most amazingly, and obliged them to exert all their influence to prevent so dangerous and mortifying an event. 1777.

In the chair he so acquitted himself, that a member of congress wrote in May, when it was thought he would return to the Massachusetts—"This letter will go by president Hancock, for whose absence from congress I am much concerned, though his great fatigue and long attendance entitle him to some relaxation. How we shall do without him I know not, for we have never yet put in a chairman, on a committee of the whole house, that could in any measure fill his place. He has not only dignity and impartiality, which are the great requisites of a president of such a body, but has an alertness, attention and readiness to conceive of any motion and its tendency, and of every alteration proposed in the course of a debate, which greatly tends to facilitate and expedite business." The chair is known to be his fort. As chairman of a committee, or any other body, he presides with much advantage to himself; but it has been and is observed, that the number at the head of whom he is, whether many or few, makes a wide difference in him: when great, he appears to be in his own element, and all is animation; if small, it is otherwise. This is common to public characters, especially where there is a fondness for popularity.

"Congress proceeded to the election of a president; Nov. and the ballots being taken, the honorable Henry Laurens was elected." He is a South Carolina delegate, a gentleman of a large estate and of an approved character. He was in England when the troubles were coming forward, and upon learning the intentions of ministry,

1777. returned with a fixed determination to risk all in the cause of his country and liberty. Gen. Washington has pointed out to him gen. Greene, as the most suitable person in his judgment to succeed in the chief command of the American army, in case he himself should be taken off by death or in any other way.

Nov. 3. Colonel Wilkinson, who brought the dispatches from gen. Gates, attended and delivered a message from him to congress in the following words, "I have it in charge from major gen. Gates, to represent to the honorable congress, that lieut. gen. Burgoyne at the time he capitulated, was strongly intrenched on a formidable post with twelve days provision; that the reduction of fort Montgomery and the enemy's consequent progress up the Hudson's river, endangered our arsenal at Albany, a reflection which left gen. Gates no time to contest the capitulation with lieut. gen. Burgoyne, but induced the necessity of immediately closing with his proposals, hazarding a disadvantageous attack, or retiring from his position for the security of our magazine; this delicate situation abridged our conquests, and procured lieut. gen. Burgoyne the terms he enjoys. Had our attack been carried against lieut. gen. Burgoyne, the dismemberment of our army must necessarily have been such as would have incapacitated it from further action. With an army in health, vigor and spirits, major gen. Gates now waits the commands of the honorable congress." Beside thanking Gates, Lincoln, Arnold, and the rest of the officers and troops under his command, the congress resolved the next day, that a medal of gold should be struck in commemoration of the convention, and in

the name of the United States be presented by the president to major gen. Gates. 1777.

Congress resolved, "That major gen. Mifflin's resignation of the office of quarter-master general be accepted, but that his rank and commission of major general be continued to him, without the pay annexed to that office, until further order of congress." In October they resolved, "That a board of war be established, to consist of three persons not members of congress." They now took up that business and proceeded to the election of the board, when major gen. Mifflin, col. Timothy Pickering, and col. Robert H. Harrison were elected. A fortnight after, in consequence of a conference between some of the members and Mifflin, they resolved, "That two additional commissioners be appointed to execute the department of the war office;" and Harrison declining to serve, they on the 27th proceeded to the election of three commissioners, when major gen. Gates, Joseph Trumbull and Richard Peters esqrs. were elected; it was then resolved, "That major gen. Gates be appointed president of the board of war." Gates was to retain his rank as major general in the army, and to officiate at the board or in the field as occasion might require.

The great business of the CONFEDERATION calls for our next attention. It was on the 11th of June 1776, that it was resolved to appoint a committee to prepare and digest the form of one. By the 12th of July they brought in a draught, which was read and ordered to be printed for the consideration of congress alone; and no member was to furnish any person with his copy, or take any steps by which the said confeder-

1777. ration might be re-printed. After having been before
congress nine and thirty times, on different days, a copy
of the confederation being made out, and sundry amend-
Nov, ments made in the diction, without altering the sense,
15. the same was agreed to on the 15th of last November,
and is as follows:

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION and PER-
PETUAL UNION between the states of New
Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island and
Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New
Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia,
North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

Article 1. The stile of this confederacy shall be "*The United States of America.*"

Article 2. Each state retains its sovereignty, freedom,
and independence, and every power, jurisdiction and
right, which is not by this confederation *expressly* dele-
gated to the United States in congress assembled.

Article 3. The said states hereby severally enter into a
firm league of friendship with each other, for their com-
mon defence, the security of their liberties and their mu-
tual and general welfare; binding themselves to assist
each other against all force offered to, or attacks made
upon them or any of them on account of religion, sove-
reignty, trade, or any other pretence whatever.

Article 4. The better to secure and perpetuate mutual
friendship and intercourse among the people of the dif-
ferent states in this union, the free inhabitants of each of
these states, (paupers, vagabonds and fugitives from jus-
tice excepted,) shall be entitled to all privileges and im-
munities of free citizens in the several states; and the

people of each state shall have free ingress and regress ¹⁷⁷⁷ to and from any other state, and shall enjoy therein all the privileges of trade and commerce, subject to the same duties; impositions and restrictions as the inhabitants thereof respectively, provided that such restrictions shall not extend so far as to prevent the removal of property imported into any state to any other state, of which the owner is an inhabitant; provided also that no imposition, duties or restriction, shall be laid by any state on the property of the United States or either of them.

If any person guilty of or charged with treason, felony or other high misdemeanor in any state, shall flee from justice and be found in any of the United States, he shall upon demand of the governor or executive power of the state from which he fled, be delivered up and removed to the state having jurisdiction of his offence.

Full faith and credit shall be given in each of these states to the records, acts and judicial proceedings of the courts and magistrates of every other state.

Article 5. For the more convenient management of the general interests of the United States, delegates shall be annually appointed, in such manner as the legislature of each state shall direct, to meet in congress on the first Monday in November, in every year, with a power reserved to each state to recall its delegates or any of them, at any time within the year, and to send others in their stead, for the remainder of the year.

No state shall be represented in congress by less than two nor by more than seven members; and no person shall be capable of being a delegate for more than three years in any term of six years; nor shall any person, being a delegate, be capable of holding any office under the

1777- the United States, for which he, or any other for his benefit, receives any salary, fees or emolument of any kind.

Each state shall maintain its own delegates in any meeting of the states, and while they act as members of the committee of the states.

In determining questions in the United States in congress assembled, each state shall have one vote.

Freedom of speech and debate in congress shall not be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of congress; and the members of congress shall be protected in their persons from arrests and imprisonments, during the time of their going to and from and attendance on congress, except for treason, felony or breach of the peace.

Article 6. No state, without the consent of the United States in congress assembled, shall send any embassy to, or receive any embassy from, or enter into any conference, agreement, alliance or treaty with any king, prince or state; nor shall any person holding any office of profit or trust under the United States, or any of them, accept of any present, emolument, office or title of any kind whatever from any king, prince or foreign state; nor shall the United States in congress assembled, or any of them, grant any title of nobility.

No two or more states shall enter into any treaty, confederation or alliance whatever between them, without the consent of the United States in congress assembled, specifying accurately the purposes for which the same is to be entered into, and how long it shall continue.

No

No state shall lay any imposts or duties, which may interfere with any stipulations in treaties entered into by the United States in congress assembled with any king, prince or state, in pursuance of any treaties already proposed by congress to the courts of France and Spain.

No vessels of war shall be kept up in time of peace by any state, except such number only, as shall be deemed necessary by the United States in congress assembled for the defence of such state or its trade; nor shall any body of forces be kept up by any state, in time of peace, except such number only as, in the judgment of the United States in congress assembled, shall be deemed requisite to garrison the forts necessary for the defence of such state; but every state shall always keep up a well regulated, and disciplined militia, sufficiently armed and accoutred, and shall provide and have constantly ready for use, in public stores, a due number of field pieces and tents, and a proper quantity of arms, ammunition and camp equipage.

No state shall engage in any war without the consent of the United States in congress assembled, unless such state be actually invaded by enemies, or shall have certain advice of a resolution being formed by some nation of Indians to invade such state, and the danger is so imminent as not to admit of a delay till the United States in congress assembled can be consulted; nor shall any state grant commissions to any ships or vessels of war, nor letters of marque or reprisal, except it be after a declaration of war by the United States in congress assembled, and then only against the kingdom or state and the subjects thereof against which war has been so declared, and under such regulations as shall be established by the United

1777. United States in congress assembled, unless such state be infested by pirates, in which case vessels of war may be fitted out for that occasion and kept so long as the danger shall continue, or until the United States in congress assembled shall determine otherwise.

Article 7. When land forces are raised by any state for the common defence, all officers of or under the rank of colonel shall be appointed by the legislature of each state respectively by whom such forces shall be raised; or in such manner as such state shall direct; and all vacancies shall be filled up by the state which first made the appointment.

Article 8. All charges of war and all other expences that shall be incurred for the common defence or general welfare, and allowed by the United States in congress assembled, shall be defrayed out of a common treasury, which shall be supplied by the several states in proportion to the value of all land within each state, granted to or surveyed for any person, as such land and the buildings and improvements thereon shall be estimated, according to such mode as the United States in congress assembled shall from time to time direct and appoint.

The taxes for paying that proportion shall be laid and levied by the authority and direction of the legislatures of the several states within the time agreed upon by the United States in congress assembled.

Article 9. The United States in congress assembled shall have the sole and exclusive right and power of determining on peace and war, except in the cases mentioned in the sixth article—of sending and receiving ambassadors—entering into treaties and alliances, provided that no treaty of commerce shall be made, whereby the legisla-

legislative power of the respective states shall be restrained 1777.
ed from imposing such imposts and duties on foreigners
as their own people are subjected to, or from prohibiting
the exportation or importation of any species of goods or
commodities whatsoever—of establishing rules for decid-
ing in all cases, what captures on land or water shall be
legal, and in what manner prizes taken by land or naval
forces in the service of the United States, shall be di-
vided or appropriated—of granting letters of marque
and reprisal in time of peace—appointing courts for the
trial of piracies and felonies committed on the high
seas, and establishing courts for receiving and determin-
ing finally appeals in all cases of captures, provided that
no member of congress shall be appointed judge of any
of the said courts.

The United States in congress assembled shall also
be the last resort on appeal in all disputes and differences
now subsisting or that hereafter may arise between two
or more states concerning boundary, jurisdiction, or any
other cause whatever; which authority shall always be
exercised in the manner following: whenever the legis-
lative or executive authority or lawful agent of any state
in controversy with another shall present a petition to
congress, stating the matter in question and praying for
a hearing, notice thereof shall be given by order of con-
gress to the legislative or executive authority of the other
state in controversy, and a day assigned for the appear-
ance of the parties by their lawful agents, who shall then
be directed to appoint by joint consent commissioners or
judges to constitute a court for hearing and determining
the matter in question; but if they cannot agree, con-
gress shall name three persons out of each of the United
States,

1777. States, and from the list of such persons each party shall alternately strike out one, the petitioners beginning, until the number shall be reduced to thirteen; and from that number not less than seven nor more than nine names, as congress shall direct, shall in the presence of congress be drawn out by lot; and the persons whose names shall be so drawn or any five of them, shall be commissioners or judges to hear and finally determine the controversy, so always as a major part of the judges, who shall hear the cause, shall agree in the determination: and if either party shall neglect to attend at the day appointed, without showing reasons which congress shall judge sufficient, or being present shall refuse to strike, the congress shall proceed to nominate three persons out of each state, and the secretary of congress shall strike in behalf of such party absent or refusing; and the judgment and sentence of the court to be appointed, in the manner before prescribed, shall be final and conclusive; and if any of the parties shall refuse to submit to the authority of such court, or to appear or defend their claim or cause, the court shall nevertheless proceed to pronounce sentence or judgment, which shall in like manner be final and decisive, the judgment or sentence and other proceedings being in either case transmitted to congress, and lodged among the acts of congress for the security of the parties concerned: provided, that every commissioner, before he sits in judgment, shall take an oath to be administered by one of the judges of the supreme or superior court of the state, where the cause shall be tried, "well and truly to hear and determine the matter in question, according to the best of his judgment, without favor, affection or hope of reward:" provided also, that no
state

state shall be deprived of territory for the benefit of the '777 United States.

All controversies concerning the private right of soil, claimed under different grants of two or more states, whose jurisdictions as they may respect such lands and the states which passed such grants are adjusted, the said grants or either of them being at the same time claimed to have originated antecedent to such settlement of jurisdiction, shall, on the petition of either party to the congress of the United States, be finally determined, as near as may be in the same manner as is before prescribed for deciding disputes respecting territorial jurisdiction between different states.

The United States in congress assembled shall also have the sole and exclusive right and power of regulating the alloy and value of coin struck by their own authority, or by that of the respective states—fixing the standard of weights and measures throughout the United States—regulating the trade and managing all affairs with the Indians not members of any of the states; provided that the legislative right of any state within its own limits be not infringed or violated—establishing and regulating post-offices from one state to another throughout all the United States, and exacting such postage on the papers passing through the same as may be requisite to defray the expences of the said office—appointing all officers of the land forces in the service of the United States, excepting regimental officers—appointing all the officers of the naval forces, and commissioning all officers whatever in the service of the United States—making rules for the government and regulation of the said land and naval forces, and directing their operations.

The

1777. The United States in congress assembled shall have authority to appoint a committee to sit in the recess of congress, to be denominated "*a committee of the states,*" and to consist of one delegate from each state, and to appoint such other committees and civil officers as may be necessary for managing the general affairs of the United States, under their direction—to appoint one of their number to preside, provided that no person be allowed to serve in the office of president more than one year in any term of three years—to ascertain the necessary sums of money to be raised for the service of the United States, and to appropriate and apply the same for defraying the public expences—to borrow money or emit bills on the credit of the United States, transmitting every half year to the respective states an account of the sums of money so borrowed or emitted—to build and equip a navy—to agree upon the number of land forces, and to make requisitions from each state for its quota, in proportion to the number of white inhabitants in such state; which requisition shall be binding, and thereupon the legislature of each state shall appoint the regimental officers, raise the men, and clothe, arm and equip them in a soldier-like manner, at the expence of the United States; and the officers and men so clothed, armed and equipped, shall march to the place appointed and within the time agreed on by the United States in congress assembled: but if the United States in congress assembled shall on consideration of circumstances, judge proper that any state should not raise men or should raise a smaller number than its quota, and that any other state should raise a greater number of men than the quota thereof, such extra number shall be raised, officered, clothed, armed and equipped

ped in the same manner as the quota of such state, unless ¹⁷⁷⁷ the legislature of such state shall judge that such extra number cannot be safely spared out of the same; in which case they shall raise, officer, clothe, arm and equip as many of such extra number as they judge can be safely spared. And the officers and men so clothed, armed and equipped, shall march to the place appointed and within the time agreed on by the United States in congress assembled.

The United States in congress assembled shall never engage in a war nor grant letters of marque and reprisal in time of peace, nor enter into any treaties or alliances, nor coin money, nor regulate the value thereof, nor ascertain the sums and expences necessary for the defence and welfare of the United States or any of them; nor emit bills, nor borrow money on the credit of the United States, nor appropriate money, nor agree upon the number of vessels of war to be built or purchased, or the number of land or sea forces to be raised, nor appoint a commander in chief of the army or navy, unless nine states assent to the same; nor shall a question on any other point, except for adjourning from day to day, be determined, unless by the votes of a majority of the United States in congress assembled.

The congress of the United States shall have power to adjourn to any time within the year, and to any place within the United States, so that no period of adjournment be for a longer duration than the space of six months, and shall publish the journal of their proceedings monthly, except such parts thereof relating to treaties, alliances or military operations, as in their judgment require secrecy; and the yeas and nays of the delegates of each

1777. state on any question shall be entered on the journal, when it is desired by any delegate; and the delegates of a state, or any of them, at his or their request, shall be furnished with a transcript of the said journal, except such parts as are above excepted, to lay before the legislatures of the several states.

Article 10. The committee of the states, or any nine of them, shall be authorized to execute, in the recess of congress, such of the powers of congress as the United States in congress assembled by the consent of nine states shall from time to time think expedient to vest them with; provided that no power be delegated to the said committee, for the exercise of which, by the articles of confederation, the voice of nine states in the congress of the United States assembled is requisite.

Article 11. Canada acceding to this confederation, and joining in the measures of the United States, shall be admitted into and entitled to all the advantages of this union: but no other colony shall be admitted into the same unless such admission be agreed to by nine states.

Article 12. All bills of credit emitted, monies borrowed, and debts contracted by or under the authority of congress, before the assembling of the United States, in pursuance of the present confederation, shall be deemed and considered as a charge against the United States, for payment and satisfaction whereof the said United States and the public faith are hereby solemnly pledged.

Article 13. Every state shall abide by the determinations of the United States in congress assembled on all questions which by this confederation are submitted to them. And the articles of this confederation shall be inviolably observed by every state, and the union shall be perpetual;

petual; nor shall any alteration at any time hereafter be made in any of them; unless such alteration be agreed to in a congress of the United States, and be afterwards confirmed by the legislatures of every state.

These articles have been forwarded to the legislatures of all the United States, to be considered; and if approved of by them, the said legislatures are advised to authorize their delegates to ratify the same in the congress, that so they may become conclusive. They have been accompanied with a circular letter, recommending them to the immediate and dispassionate attention of the legislatures; and urging them to hasten the conclusion of the plan for confederation. They will be supported in this state by the influence of Mr. Samuel Adams and Mr. John Adams, who obtained leave of absence to visit their families a week before the finished copy was agreed to by congress. These two gentlemen stand in the relation of second cousins to each other.

The same day the copy was agreed to, a committee was appointed to collect and digest some late discoveries for making molasses and spirits from the juice of Indian corn stalks, and to report a plan for communicating such discoveries to the inhabitants of the several states. The scarcity and dearth of molasses and spirits, and the difficulty of procuring a supply from the West Indies, have induced some ingenious enterprising minds to grind the Indian corn stalks, while in a certain state of verdure, and to obtain from the juice, by boiling it, a kind of molasses. Several have followed the example; and the expectation of the public in many places is raised; but the quantity of molasses produced is too

1777. small, and the quality too poor, to answer expences and to supply the demands of the market, so that this mode of obtaining it will soon cease.

Nov.
20

It was reported by a committee, " That an inroad has been made on the western frontiers of Virginia and Pennsylvania by some savage tribes of Indians, wherein a number of helpless people have been cruelly massacred, and the peaceable inhabitants driven from their homes, and reduced to great distress: and That, from a number of papers stiled proclamations, under the hand and seal of Henry Hamilton, lieut. gov. of Fort Detroit, as well as from other information and circumstances, it appears that these savages have been instigated by British agents and emissaries, and particularly by the said H. Hamilton to this barbarous and murderous war."

Congress having received information, that the enemies of the United States endeavoured to propagate in Europe groundless reports, that a treaty had been held between congress and the commissioners of the king of Great Britain, by which it was probable that a reconciliation would take place, resolved, " That the commissioners of the said United States, at the several courts in Europe, be authorized to represent to the courts at which they respectively reside, that no treaty whatever has been held between the king of Great Britain, or any of his commissioners and the said United States, since their declaration of independence." They also resolved, " That all proposals for a treaty between the king of Great Britain, or any of his commissioners, and the United States of America, inconsistent with the independence of the said states, or with such treaties or alliances as may be formed under their authority, will be rejected by congress."

gress." The communication however of this last resolve, was to be suspended until upon a general consultation of the commissioners a majority should judge it necessary. Congress (plunged into difficulties through an excess of paper currency, which they are continually increasing by new emissions) have been and are attempting remedies that can never answer. Some are of that nature as necessarily to produce baneful consequences; and yet are persisted in after trial: of this kind is the regulating and ascertaining the price of labor, manufactures, internal produce, and commodities imported from foreign parts. It has been recommended to all the states to appoint commissioners to convene, some in one place on the fifteenth of January, some in another on the fifteenth of February, for the regulating of prices; and after that, to enact suitable laws to enforce the observance of such regulations. They have also resolved, "That it be earnestly recommended to the several states, as soon as may be, to confiscate and make sale of all the real and personal estates therein of such of their inhabitants and other persons who have forfeited the same, and the right to the protection of their respective states; and to invest the money arising from the sales in continental loan office certificates, to be appropriated in such manner as the respective states shall hereafter direct." This resolve will encourage the states to make sale of the estates alluded to, but will not bind them to the disposal of the purchase-money in the manner proposed. Artful individuals will avail themselves of it for their own emolument, but it will be of little or no benefit to the public at large.

1777.
Dec.
8. Mr. Silas Deane has been mentioned in a former letter. Congress came to a final resolution respecting his recall, in these words—"Whereas it is of the greatest importance, that congress should, at this critical conjuncture, be well informed of the state of affairs in Europe; and whereas congress have resolved, that the honorable Silas Deane esq; be recalled from the court of France, and have appointed another commissioner to supply his place there: Ordered, That the committee for foreign affairs write to the honorable Silas Deane esq; and direct him to embrace the first opportunity of returning to America, and upon his arrival to repair with all possible dispatch to congress." The explanation of this business will be best conveyed in the language of one of the committee—"Mr. Deane not being recalled upon a motion made at the time of our disavowal of Du Coudray's treaty, a new motion was made by one of the committee on September the 8th.—On that day, "The congress took into consideration the report of the committee on foreign applications, wherein they set forth, That besides a number of officers who are come from Europe and the West Indies of their own accord to solicit for rank and employment in the American army, there are others who have proceeded upon the encouragement of conventions made and signed at Paris by Silas Deane esq; as agent for the United States of North America:—That Mr. Deane had no authority to make such conventions:—and That congress therefore are not bound to ratify or fulfil them." This referred to a new list of major generals, brigadiers, colonels, &c. who were ready to relinquish all the parts of their agreement except rank; but said the committee, "The American

rican army having been arranged before the arrival of 1777—these gentlemen in America, their expectations cannot be complied with, without deranging it, and thereby injuring at so critical a juncture the American cause.“ The report was agreed to, and the motion made—

” Whereas Silas Deane esq; *when agent under the committee of secret correspondence*, entered into conventions with several foreign officers, which congress have declared themselves not bound to ratify, and which in the present situation of affairs they could not comply with, without deranging the army, and thereby injuring at this critical juncture the American cause: And whereas the credit, reputation and usefulness of Silas Deane esq; now one of the American commissioners in France, will be greatly impaired by the consequences of his indiscretion in having entered into such conventions, his recall becomes necessary for the interest of these United States—therefore resolved, That Silas Deane esq; now one of the American commissioners in France, be forthwith recalled, and that from the day of his receiving this resolve, all and every power with which he hath been vested by congress do cease and determine, and that he take the earliest opportunity to embark for North America, and repair to congress.“ The person who read this in his place was, upon being seconded, entreated to withdraw it, in which he acquiesced, upon a general avowal of the necessity of recalling Mr. Deane in some milder way. On Nov. 21, partiality and tenderness struck away all preamble, and a naked resolve passed,

” That Silas Deane esq; be recalled from the court of France, and that the committee for foreign affairs be directed to take proper measures for speedily communicating

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1777. cating the pleasure of congress herein to Mr. Deane and the other commissioners of the United States at the court of France:—That Monday next be assigned for choosing a commissioner to the court of France, in place of Silas Deane esq. On the 28th, Mr. John Adams was chosen. No time being limited for Mr. Deane's return, the larded resolve of December the 8th was made. Had a proper dignity been maintained on the 8th of September, the recall would not have been a seeming mystery, or rather a compliment. Though the chairman of the committee for foreign applications was the mover of the proper resolves, yet he finally gave into the over-tenderness of the house, when he acted for foreign affairs in his letter of December the 8th, and in his private letter to Dr. Franklin."

Congress resolved, "that the commissioners at the courts of France and Spain be directed to exert their utmost endeavours to obtain a loan of two millions sterling, on the faith of the Thirteen United States." They also received accounts from gen. Gates relative to the retreat of the British from Tyconderoga and Mount Independence. By letters of gen. Conway's writing to particular members, they were led into a resolution, "That an appointment be made of inspectors general, agreeable to the practice of the best disciplined European armies:" and from thence to elect him an inspector general, and a major general. This promotion, which took place the 13th of December, occasioned much uneasiness among the officers; and they requested gen. Washington not to publish it till they had met, and made a proper representation of their grievances. Conway thought himself entitled to a superiority over them, from his having served

served more than thirty years, and before some of the 1777. brigadiers were born, and from the number of men he had commanded for many years in an old army. But these reasons did not reconcile them to his being put over their heads. They might be the more disgusted from his declaring that no two regiments manœuvred alike, and that there were hardly two officers in each regiment able to command the manœuvres. On the 3d of January, the brigadiers sent a remonstrance against his appointment. The objections against him were, that he was intriguing at congress in concert with gens. Gates and Mifflin, in order to remove gen. Washington—that he gave himself at congress the merit of the Germantown affair—that his powers of inspector general tended to diminish the power of gen. Washington—and that, in a paragraph of a letter, he reflected severely upon the commander in chief and his counsellors. Such is the prevailing dislike to him, that he will be of little service in future. The uneasiness which his promotion produced, did not escape his notice, but has led him to renew a former proposal of returning to France.

In order to obtain a supply of clothing for the army, Dec. the congress resolved to recommend to the respective ²⁰ legislatures the enacting of laws, appointing persons to seize, for the use of the continental army, all necessary articles of clothing, which may be in the possession of any persons inhabitants of or residents within their respective states, for the purpose of sale; and that the value of such goods be ascertained at the rate which the said articles shall be stated at by the convention of the committees, agreeable to the late recommendation. A memorial from lieut. col. Barton, who took gen. Prescott prisoner, was read in congress, on which they resolved,

“ That

1777. " That on account of his enterprising spirit, and merie
Dec. in taking the general, he be promoted to the rank and
24. pay of a colonel in the service of the United States, and
that he be recommended to gen. Washington, to be em-
ployed in such services as he may deem most adapted
to his genius." In testimony of their approbation of
the patience, fidelity and zeal of the officers and soldiers
under the immediate command of gen. Washington,
they directed, six days after, that one months extraor-
dinary pay should be given to each; which was no more
than justice, considering what they had suffered. The
next, being the last day of the year, they had under con-
sideration, the information sent them from Boston by
31. Mr. Samuel Otis, their deputy clothier general in the
Massachusetts, acquainting them, that he had contracted
with sundry persons for a large quantity of clothing, at
the rate of ten to eighteen hundred per cent. and that
some of the holders of the said goods refused to deliver
them until they should receive the cash. Upon this they
resolved, " That Mr. Otis be directed to pay only for
such of the said clothing as he may have actually received,
at the rate for which he may have contracted for
such clothing:—and That it be most earnestly recom-
mended to the legislative authority of the state of Massa-
chusetts-bay immediately to take and seize the residue
of the clothing, which the holders thereof have refused
to deliver to the said Samuel Otis, agreeable to the re-
solutions of the congress of the 20th instant, which
clothing shall be paid for in manner, and at the rate
mentioned therein, and not otherwise." A letter was
written to the president of the council upon the occa-
sion, in which they failed not to attempt exciting resent-
ment against the proprietors of the goods for the crime
of

of extortion, and the greater one of refusing to deliver¹⁷⁷⁷ the goods upon the credit of the Thirteen United States. "This irrefragable evidence of the depravity of morals in so many of the citizens of these states, is a most alarming circumstance," say they; "and if the several governments do not speedily exert their authority effectually to suppress such unheard of extortion, it will unquestionably issue, and at no very distant period, in the destruction of the liberties of this continent. Shall we then tamely see ourselves compelled, by the wicked conduct of some of the citizens of these states, to the cruel necessity of submitting to the mercy of an enraged tyrant?" The president was desired to lay the resolutions before the general assembly, who were requested to keep them and their proceedings thereon secret, till carried into execution. The general court, instead of interfering, has prudently left the business to take its own course. Those traders, who want to go to market again and make fresh purchases, cannot sell upon the credit of even the Thirteen United States. The increasing depreciation of the currency is another reason against it. The paper emission is now more than three hundred per cent. for hard money, and by the end of April will probably be four for one: so that when this, the risks of the sea, the scarcity of the commodity, the few returns that can be made, the advance of expences through the rise of provision, labor, &c. and other circumstances are taken into consideration, the rate of from ten to eighteen hundred per cent, has far more the appearance than the reality of extortion.

The convention and convention-troops demand our next attention,

While

1777. While upon their march to the neighbourhood of Boston, the British behaved with such insolence as confirmed the country in their determination never to submit; for the people said, "If they are thus insolent now they are prisoners, what would they be were they our masters?" The Germans stole and robbed the houses, as they came along, of clothing and every thing on which they could lay their hands, to a large amount. When at Worcester indeed they themselves were robbed, though in another way. One Dawes, the issuing commissary, upon the first company's coming to draw their rations, balanced the scales by putting into that which contained the weight, a large stone; when that company was gone (unobserved by the Germans, but not by all present) the stone was taken away before the next came, and all the other companies except the first had short allowance. The troops having finished their march, were quartered in the barracks near Cambridge. It was with difficulty gen. Glover could procure quarters for the gens. Burgoyne, Reidesel and Phillips, in the town itself. The inhabitants were totally averse to accommodating them. They could not forget the burning of Charlestown. A remonstrance was soon presented to Burgoyne by the officers, complaining, that instead of being conveniently lodged, according to their different ranks, agreeable to the convention, they were put into barracks, made of single boards, five, six, and seven in a room, without any distinction of rank. Unfortunately for them, there was upon the committee appointed by the general court to the business of quartering them, one John Taylor, who, though of the council, was of a base spirit, and had raised himself by it to the possession

of considerable property and influence. He disgraced 1777 religion by making a great profession. The last however gave him much weight with well-meaning men, who had only a superficial acquaintance with him. This person could put up with any lodging; and thought, that what would do for him, might do for British prisoners though officers. Thus it happened that they were no better accommodated. They had reason to complain; but the treatment which gen. Burgoyne personally met with was pleasing. He went to Boston and dined at gen. Heath's, who commands in this department. He observed with great satisfaction the good behaviour of the towns-people. There was no rabble collected to insult him, either going or returning. He remarked, when recrossing the ferry to where Charlestown stood, (when his eyes surveyed with admiration its awfully majestic conflagration) that he should have met with very different treatment even in London.

Suspensions began to be entertained lest the general had some sinister design of conveying the troops to New York or elsewhere, when they should be embarked, instead of sailing with them to Great Britain; and the public wished to have some pretence for detaining them. It was hinted to congress, that should Sir W. Howe continue obstinately to refuse settling an equitable cartel for the exchange of prisoners, they would be justified in ordering the fulfilling of the convention of Saratoga to be delayed, until the United States received justice in that particular. Congress soon ordered a committee to consider a return of ordnance and stores taken from the enemy, which was enclosed in a letter of the 10th of November, accompanying that hint. Upon the re-
port

1777. port of the committee, on the 22d, the president was directed immediately to send an express to gen. Gates, desiring answers to several questions. On December
Dec. the 3d, the general wrote from Albany to the president
3. —“ I had the honor to receive your excellency's letter of the 23d ult. by Mr. Pierce, and immediately proceeded to dispatch to the congress the required answers. Respecting the standards, gen. Burgoyne declared upon his honor, that the colours of the regiments were left in Canada. As to the military chest, its contents might so easily be disposed of, that to have sought for it would have been ineffectual. The British army, all last war, left the paymaster general and the military chest in some secure town, and warrants were granted upon the paymaster general there. From the best accounts, the enemy's army had been lately cleared off; so that it is not probable there was any military chest. The medicines were left with the general hospital, which gen. Burgoyne left behind him at Freeman's farm. Many of the cartouch boxes were left, and some were carried away. The mentioning of the accoutrements was forgotten in the convention. Those that have been carried off have been sold upon the road to Boston for drams. The quantity of field ammunition and musket cartridges taken, are by no means inconsiderable. The rest was used and destroyed before the treaty commenced. The muskets will ever be less in number than the prisoners, as the drummers and staff officers do not carry firelocks. Many arms were lost in the two hundred batteaus, that were taken from the enemy in their retreat from Freeman's farm, and many others were plundered by the militia on the east side of the river. The bayonets were

also pilfered by our own people. The very guards themselves supplied their wants from the piles. Many of the scabbards for the bayonets were disposed of in the like manner. I believe there was no destruction of military stores after the convention, by or with the privacy of gen. Burgoyne or his officers. It is so extraordinary for a British army to surrender their arms, that we ought not to wonder at the violent and disappointed for committing some irregularities; but I do not conceive, that any thing of sufficient consequence was done, to justify our charge of their having violated the convention. On the day gen. Burgoyne surrendered, I received repeated expresses to inform me, that the enemy's fleet had advanced up to within a few hours sailing of Albany. The removal of the army was therefore immediately necessary to cover that city and secure our magazines. My principal attention was of course directed towards that object. Gens. Glover and Whipple gave me their assistance and entire approbation in the settlement of the convention. When things of such importance must be done in a hurry, some articles of seeming importance never fail to be omitted. The arms were piled up agreeable to the letter of the convention, and their condition as good as can be expected upon such occasions. Their being wholly unfit for service, is partly owing to the land and water carriages, but chiefly to the want of proper packages to secure them. Our own men have changed them; but here I think we should not imprudently expose the infant state of our military discipline."

General Burgoyne was desirous of altering the place for the embarkation of the convention troops from the port

1777. port of Boston to that of Rhode-Island or the Sound, contiguous to New York; which as well as Rhode-Island was possessed by the British. He wrote to gen. Washington upon the subject on the 25th of November. The American commander forwarded the letter to congress. They on the day it was received, the 17th of December, resolved, "That gen. Washington be directed to inform gen. Burgoyne, that congress will not receive, nor consider any proposition for indulgence or altering the terms of the convention of Saratoga, unless immediately directed to their own body." The next day they received gen. Gates's letter of December the 3d, enclosing a letter to him from gen. Burgoyne of November the 14th, wherein he declared, that the public faith, plighted in the convention of Saratoga, was broken on the part of the United States, in as much as the officers included in the convention had not, since their arrival in Massachusetts-bay, been accommodated with quarters agreeable to their respective ranks. Congress had now obtained what they wanted, a plea for detaining the convention troops. Some of the members, not attending sufficiently to dates and circumstances, imagined that Burgoyne expected to have sailed before his letter of the 14th could have reached congress time enough for them to have detained him; but it was scarce possible that such an expectation could have existed, when he did not write to gen. Washington on the subject of changing the place of embarkation before the 25th, and could not, till permission was received, possibly embark at Rhode-Island, to which port the transports were sent, and of whose arrival he was informed by letter of December the fifth. The coming
from

from New York through the Sound to Rhode-Island, 1777. was so much more convenient and less hazardous, than going round by Long-Island and Cape Cod to Boston, especially at such a season, that the application for changing the place of embarkation was natural.

Congress resolved, "That the charge made by gen. Burgoyne, of a breach of public faith on the part of these states, is not warranted by the just construction of any article of the convention of Saratoga; that it is a strong indication of his intention, and affords just grounds of fear that he will avail himself of such pretended breach of the convention, in order to disengage himself and the army under him, of the obligations they are under to these United States; and that the security which these states have had in his personal honor is hereby destroyed." The next day they resolved therefore—"That the embarkation of gen. Burgoyne and the troops under his command, be suspended till a distinct and explicit ratification of the convention of Saratoga shall be properly notified by the court of Great Britain." It was then ordered, "That the resolutions, and the report on which the same are grounded, be re-committed."

They took into consideration afresh, the report of the committee, which says, that the cartouch boxes, &c. agreeable to the spirit of the convention, and the technical interpretation of the word *arms*, ought to have been delivered up. It considers Burgoyne's refusal to give the descriptive lists, which congress had directed to be taken, in an alarming point of view, more especially as nine days previous to the refusal, he had in his letter to Gates declared, that the public faith was broken. It insists upon this charge of a breach of faith, being a

1778. deliberate act of judgment, and so of a most serious nature, pregnant with alarming consequences. It attempts to invalidate the charge, and asserts, that by an examination of the articles it will appear, that the stipulation for quartering the officers was not to be construed in that rigorous sense in which Burgoyne affects to consider it, but on the contrary was "agreed to as far as circumstances would admit." This assertion reduces the stipulation to a mere non-entity, if it is left with the stipulating party wholly to judge of these circumstances. The committee who made the report mentioned, but forbore "to lay any stress on the seemingly inadequate number of vessels (being only twenty-six transports) for an army consisting of 5642 men, in a winter's voyage to Europe; or on the improbability of the enemy's being able, on so short a notice, to victual such a fleet and army for a voyage of such length." It is happy that they did not lay any stress upon it, as it would have manifested how much they were biassed by an eagerness to vindicate the measures they were desirous of adopting. The committee was a committee of the whole. Twenty-six transports, of 250 ton each, would carry 6500 men, allowing a ton for every man. In winter time they could safely stow more closely than in warmer weather. The voyage though long, in going from America to Europe, is performed generally much sooner in that than any other season, by reason of the prevalence of the north-west winds; so that less provision is required for the passage.

The former resolves were passed the second time, but not till congress had resolved, "That as many of the cartouch boxes and several other articles of military

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accoutrements, annexed to the persons of the non-commissioned officers and soldiers, included in the convention of Saratoga, have not been delivered up, the convention on the part of the British army has not been strictly complied with:—That the refusal of gen. Burgoyne to give descriptive lists of the non-commissioned officers and privates belonging to his army, subsequent to his declaration that the public faith was broke, is considered by congress in an alarming point of view; since a compliance could only have been prejudicial to that army in case of an infraction of the convention on their part.” It was in vain that the general explained the intention and construction of the passage objected to in his letter; or that his officers, in order to remove the difficulty occasioned by it, respectively signed their parole. He even pledged himself, that his officers would still join with him in signing any instrument that might be thought necessary for confirming or renewing the validity of the convention; but it was to no purpose. Congress have been unalterable: and the detention of the troops is now settled.

On the 9th of January, the Massachusetts general court permitted Dr. Benjamin Church, whose treachery had subjected him to a long confinement, to take passage on board a brigantine bound to Martinico*.

The American privateers and continental shipping, have taken a large number of vessels belonging to Great Britain, and sent them into their own harbours. They have undoubtedly taken many others upon the European coasts, that we have not heard of. We have had ac-

* She never reached her port, and has never been heard of since sailing.

*777 counts of several; and that the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland have been insulted by them, in a manner never before ventured upon by your hardiest enemies; so as to produce the appointment of a convoy (for the first time ever known) to protect the linen ships from Dublin and Newry. We learn also that the General Mifflin privateer, after making repeated captures, arrived at Brest, and saluted the French admiral, who returned the salute in form, as to the vessel of a sovereign independent state. We are likewise told, that though lord Stormont, on his threatening to return immediately to Great Britain, unless satisfaction was given, obtained an order requiring not only all American privateers, but their prizes, to leave the French ports, the same is evaded. However, his majesty's vessels on the American station, have not been idle; for they have captured very considerably on these coasts and the West Indies. Their captures, indeed, are generally not of much value singly, yet they have furnished, at times, some rich prizes, and in the aggregate have been of great amount. But the balance of property will most certainly be in favor of the Americans. The continental frigate Hancock, of thirty-two guns, mostly twelve pounders, commanded by capt. Manley, was taken, on the 8th of July, by Sir George Collier, of his majesty's ship the Rainbow.

Sir George, in company with the Victor brig, discovered three sail in the morning of the sixth. He chased with all the sail he could crowd; but observing the next day that they steered different courses, about two in the afternoon he tacked after the Hancock, which appeared the largest ship. She seemed at first rather

to outfail the Rainbow; but Manley endeavouring to 1777. make his ship sail better, started all his water forward, and so put her out of trim. At half past eight the next morning, Sir George hailed her, and let the men know, that if they expected quarter, they must strike immediately. Manley endeavoured to avail himself of a fresh breeze just springing up, Sir George therefore fired into him, on which he struck after a chase of thirty-nine hours. He had lately taken the Fox of twenty-eight guns on the banks of Newfoundland; which was one of the three sail, and being discovered by the Flora on the 7th, was chased till re-taken. The third was the Boston continental frigate of thirty guns, commanded by capt. McNeal, which escaped. The public are not satisfied with the conduct of the latter, imagining that if he had not left his consort, and that if both had behaved well, neither would have been captured. The Hancock's compliment was 290 men, near as many as the Rainbow's.

On the first of December, the ship Flamand, capt. Landais, arrived at Portsmouth from Marseilles. Mr. John Baptiste Lazarus Theyeneau de Francey is come supercargo and agent for the house of Roderique Hortales and company, alias Mr. Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais. The ship has brought 48 pieces of brass cannon, four pounders, with carriages complete—19 nine inch mortars—2500 bombs, nine inches—2000 four pound balls—a quantity of intrenching tools—3000 fuses—1110 of another quality for dragoons—about 18,000 pounds of gunpowder—and 61,051 of brimstone.

The continent is looking out for important news from France, saying a great many things about it.

LETTER II.

Roxbury, June, 1, 1778.

THE hint you have received of a design to remove gen. Washington from the command of the American army, will have made you desirous of knowing more of that business: let it then be first related.

1778.
Jan.
23. The general, being applied to by one of his correspondents, answered from Valley-forge January the 23d—
“Whether a serious design of placing gen. Lee (before captivity) at the head of the army, had ever entered into the head of a member of congress or not, I never was at the trouble of inquiring. I am told a scheme of that kind is now on foot by some, in behalf of another gentleman—whether true or false—serious or merely to try the pulse—I neither know nor care. Neither interested, nor ambitious views, led me into the service. I did not solicit the command; but accepted it after much entreaty, with all that diffidence, which a conscious want of ability and experience, equal to the discharge of so important a trust, must naturally excite in a mind not quite devoid of thought: and after I did engage, pursued the great line of my duty, and the object in view (as far as my judgment could direct) as pointedly as the needle to the pole. So soon as the public gets dissatisfied with my services, or a person is found better qualified to answer her expectation, I shall quit the helm with as much pleasure, and retire to a private station
with

with as much content, as ever the wearied pilgrim felt upon his safe arrival at the holy land, or haven of hope; and shall wish most devoutly, that those who come after may meet with more prosperous gales than I have done, and less difficulty. If the expectation of the public has not been answered by my endeavours, I have more reasons than one to regret it; but at present I shall only add, that a day may come, when the public cause is no longer to be benefitted by a concealment of our circumstances, and till this period arrives, I shall not be among the first to disclose such truths as may injure it, however my character in the mean while may suffer." On the 15th of February he had occasion for writing—"I can assure you, that no person ever heard me drop an expression that had a tendency to resignation. The same principles that led me to embark in the opposition to the arbitrary claims of Great Britain, operate with additional force at this day; nor is it my desire to withdraw my services, while they are considered of importance in the present contest. But to report a design of this kind, is among the arts which those, who are endeavouring to effect a change, are practising to bring it to pass. There is not an officer in the service of the United States, that would return to the sweets of domestic life with more heartfelt joy than I should, but I mean not to shrink in the cause. The design is not only seen through but reprobated." On the 20th, Patrick Henry esq; governor of Virginia, forwarded an anonymous letter which had been sent him, to the general, and added—"There may be some scheme or party forming to your prejudice. The enclosed leads to a suspicion. Believe me, Sir, I have too high a sense of

1778. the obligations America has to you, to abet or countenance so unworthy a proceeding. I really think your personal welfare, and the happiness of America are intimately connected." The anonymous letter was dated—York Town, Jan. 12, 1778. It begins with highly complimenting Mr. Henry, and then proceeds to sketch out a dismal picture, and to hint at the remedy—"America can be only undone by herself. Her representation in congress is dwindled to only twenty-one members—her Adams—her Wilson—her Henry, are no more among them. Her counsels, weak—and partial remedies (applied constantly for universal diseases. Her army, what is it? a *mob*. Discipline unknown or wholly neglected:—The quarter-masters and commissioners departments filled with idleness, ignorance and peculation:—Our hospitals crowded with six thousand sick, and more dying in one month than perished in the field during the whole of the last campaign:—The country distracted with the Don Quixotte attempts to regulate the price of provisions:—An *artificial* famine created by it, and a *real* one dreaded from it. The northern army has shown what Americans are capable of with a *general* at their head. The southern army is no ways inferior.—A Gates, a Lee, or a Conway would in a few weeks render them an irresistible body of men. The last in one of his letters to a friend says, "A great and good God hath decreed America to be free—or she—and weak counselors would have ruined her long ago." You may rest assured of *each* of the facts related in this letter." When Conway had recovered his original letter, which was written in October, he said to gen. Washington, in one of January the 27th,—"I find, with great satisfaction, that

that the paragraph so much spoken of does not exist in 1778. said letter, nor any thing like it. I must depend upon your justice, candor and generosity, for putting a stop to this forgery. Had he sent the letter itself, the conviction of the forgery might have been deemed much stronger; whereas many will doubt whether there was a forgery, upon being told that one of his warmest friends quoted the paragraph as authentic so early as October the 21st. Periodical letters were published and circulated in the continental newspapers, under the signature of De Lisle, and the pretence of being translations from the French, artfully calculated to promote the design against Washington, by insinuating into the mind of the reader, ideas tending to lessen him in the eyes of the public. The writer of the preceding anonymous letter is supposed to be the author of them. The design has not succeeded. The general has had too great a share of the people's confidence and affection, to admit of an open attempt to remove him. Several members of congress were engaged in the business—some of the Massachusetts delegates—particularly Mr. Samuel Adams. The army was so confident of it, and so enraged, that persons were stationed to watch him, as he approached the camp on his return home. But he is commonly possessed of good intelligence, and was careful to keep at a safe distance. Had he fallen into the hands of the officers, when in that paroxysm of resentment, they would probably have handled him so as to have endangered his life, and tarnished their own honor.

The plan seems to have been this—To engage the Massachusetts assembly and the Virginia house of burgesses, to give instructions to their delegates in congress,

1778, to move for an inquiry into the causes of the ill success attending the campaign of 1776; and then to contrive that such resolves should be given into, as would either remove the general or produce his resignation. Mean while the names of Gates and Mifflin were held up, and played off to ripen the measure. But the anonymous attempt upon the governor of Virginia was reprobated by him; and the Massachusetts assembly was not in a temper to admit of the trial to ensnare them. As to gens. Gates and Mifflin, they have cleared themselves from having any design of removing the commander in chief. The former has written to an intimate

April correspondent—"York Town, 4th April, 1778. Dear
 4 Sir, Last night I received your affectionate letter of the 16th last, that of the 25th of February came to hand a few days before. Your remarks upon the works and defences of your capital city, are just; and I am convinced the town is lost in a very few hours after they are attacked. I have daily and weekly been telling your, and the other eastern delegates, that not only the metropolis, but the whole coasts of New England were, in my opinion, the grand object of the enemy's resentment, for the ensuing campaign: they were a parcel of blundering blockheads, not to make that their object the last year. I think they might then have united their whole force, and have made a much more honorable end of their summer's work than it pleased heaven to give them.—I find by your letters, that Boston, as well as this part of the continent, is infected by incendiaries who endeavour, by every villainous art, to impress a belief.—That gen. Mifflin and myself, are in a league, with other designing and ambitious spirits, to supersede gen.

gen. Washington. Nothing can be more wicked, no- 1778.
 thing more false than this diabolical calumny. Gen.
 Mifflin, to whom I made known the industry of his
 enemies and mine, and the tricks of their emissaries,
 writes to you by this conveyance. You know his honor,
 merit, and services to the public; you also know, that
 whenever I have been called forth, I have done my best
 for the establishment of independence and peace: is it
 generous therefore, that we two should be selected for a
 sacrifice to a junto? For my part I solemnly declare, I
 never was engaged in any plan or plot for the removal
 of gen. Washington *, nor do I believe any such plot
 ever existed—so help me—. Your's most truly."

You may credit Gates's not believing such plot; but
 you must believe differently. The stile of gen. Mif-
 flin's letter was—"Dear Mr. ——— *Audi et alteram par-*
tem. I declare to you, with the greatest sincerity and
 solemnity, that I never formed a plan or a party to in-
 jure gen. Washington's command.—I never desired to
 have any person whomsoever take the command of the
 American army from him; nor have I said, or done any
 thing, of, or respecting him, which the public service
 did not require; and which I would not have said, with
 great freedom, to you as his friend, and as a friend to
 American Independency. I never aspired, in thought,
 to the command of the army, and always would have
 deprecated the idea as improper and dangerous to myself
 and to America had that idea occurred, which it never did

* When gen. Gates's letters were examined by me at his seat in
 Virginia, the latter end of 1781, there was not a single paragraph to
 be met with, that contained any intimation of his being concerned in
 such a plan.

1778. to me.—I hope to see you before long—I most ardently wish it—and I pledge myself to you and my country, that I can and will justify my character of a patriot in all points to your satisfaction. This disagreeable relation will finish with a paragraph from gen. Washington's letter of March the 28th.—My caution to avoid every thing that could injure the service, prevented me from communicating, but to a very few of my friends, the intrigues of a faction, which I know was formed against me, since it might serve to publish our internal dissensions; but their own restless zeal to advance their views has too clearly betrayed them, and made concealment on my part fruitless."

Let us pass on to another event, which has the appearance of being related to some plot. On Monday, January the 12th, the president laid before congress a packet containing blank papers, which he received the day before from capt. John Folger, who was sent by the commissioners at Paris with dispatches to congress. Mr. Folger was ordered to be confined in close prison; but in the beginning of May, the committee, who were appointed to examine into his conduct reported, "That they have made as full an examination into that business as the evidence they were able to obtain would permit, and on the whole have no proof of any guilt in Mr. Folger;" whereupon the captain has been permitted to go home, and has had all his expences paid him. The committee suspect there has been foul play somewhere. They have taken off the seal from the packet, and sent it back to Paris, to be examined by the original impression, that they may see if the fraud can be detected by that mean. What makes the affair more mysterious

is, that the other dispatches brought by the captain, contained state papers directed for the late president Mr. Hancock, and had no appearance of having been searched. Time must produce an explanation of this dark business, which has been rendered the more suspicious by the arrival of Mr. Francey with a letter from Mr. Deane *only*, dated Paris, September the 10th, 1777, recommending him as Mr. Beaumarchais' agent, and pressing the execution of the business which he came upon. The committee for foreign affairs, in their first letter to the commissioners after his arrival, said, "We think it strange that the commissioners did not *jointly* write by Mr. Francey, considering the very important designs of his coming over, viz. to settle the mode of payment for the past cargoes, sent by Roderique Hortales and Co. [alias Mr. Beaumarchais] and to make contracts for future. It is certain, that much eclarcissement is, at this late moment, wanting." Mr. Francey from time to time sent to the committee of commerce, letters upon the business with which he was intrusted; which were reported to congress for their consideration. After being before them once and again, Mr. Francey, as agent for Roderique Hortales and company, settled his contract with them, on the 8th of April. By that contract it was stipulated among other articles, that the costs of the several cargoes *already* shipped by the said company, were to be fairly stated at the current prices and usual mercantile charges in France, of the dates at which they were shipped.

Let us for a while employ ourselves about military concerns.

The

1778. The condition of the army at Valley-ford, was far
 Jan. from being the most eligible or respectable; and in case
 1. the enemy had come out of Philadelphia, and made a
 general push, would have been exceeding hazardous.
 Gen. Washington was compelled by necessity to employ
 the troops in making seizures; which excited the greatest
 uneasiness imaginable among their best and warmest
 friends, beside spreading disaffection among the people.
 He ever regrets being forced upon such a measure, and
 considers it among his worst misfortunes; as it not only
 occasions a dreadful alarm, but never fails, even in ve-
 teran armies, under the most rigid and exact discipline,
 to raise in the soldiery a disposition to licentiousness,
 plunder, and robbery. The relief obtained was of no
 long continuance.

Feb. He thus described the distresses of the army on the
 16. 16th of February—"For some days past there has been
 little less than a famine in camp. Naked and starving
 as they are, we cannot enough admire the incomparable
 patience and fidelity of the soldiery, that they have not,
 ere this, been excited by their sufferings to a general
 mutiny and dispersion. This is the second time in the
 present year, that we have been upon the verge of a
 dissolution for want of provision." As to clothings,
 "he was continually tantalized with accounts from all
 quarters, of the prodigious quantity that was purchased
 and forwarded for the use of the army, while none reached
 them, or so badly sorted as to be totally useless. The
 poor soldier had a pair of stockings given him without
 shoes, or a waistcoat without a coat or blanket to his
 back; and thus he derived little benefit from what he
 received. Perhaps by Midsummer he may receive thick
 stockings,

stockings, shoes, and blankets, which he will contrive 1778⁴ to get rid of in the most expeditious manner. In this way, by an eternal round of the most stupid management, the public treasure is expended to no kind of purpose, while the men have been left to perish by inches with cold and nakedness.

Upon a full conviction that the salvation of the cause depended on making provision for the half pay of the officers, the general communicated his thoughts to some of the congress in the following words—"With far the greatest part of mankind, interest is the governing principle. Almost every man is more or less under its influence. Motives of public virtue may, for a time, or in particular instances, actuate men to the observance of a conduct purely disinterested; but they are not of themselves sufficient to produce a persevering conformity, to the refined dictates and obligations of social duty. We find it exemplified in the American officers as well as in all other men. At the commencement of the dispute, in the first effusions of their zeal, and looking upon that service to be only temporary, they entered into it without paying any regard to pecuniary or selfish considerations: but finding its duration to be much longer than they at first suspected, and that instead of deriving any advantage from the hardships and dangers to which they were exposed, they on the contrary were losers by their patriotism, and fell far short of a competency to supply their wants, they have gradually abated in their ardor; and with many an entire disinclination to the service under its present circumstances has taken place.—When an officer's commission is valuable to him, and he fears to lose it, you may then exact obedience from him. It is

1778: not indeed consistent with reason or justice, to expect that one set of men should make a sacrifice of property, domestic ease and happiness, and encounter the rigors of the field, the perils and vicissitudes of war, to obtain those blessings which every citizen will enjoy in common with them, without some adequate compensation. It must also be a comfortless reflection to any man, that after he may have contributed to securing the rights of his country, by the risk of his life and the ruin of his fortune, there will be no provision made for preventing himself and family from sinking into indigence and wretchedness. Nothing would serve more fully to reanimate their languishing zeal, and interest them thoroughly in the service, than a half pay and pensionary establishment." The general supported his interposition

April in behalf of the officers, by a second letter of April the
 21. 21st—"Men may speculate as they will; they may talk of patriotism; they may draw a few examples from ancient story of great achievements performed by its influence, but whoever builds upon it, as a sufficient basis for conducting a long and bloody war, will find themselves deceived in the end. We must take the passions of men as nature has given them, and those principles as a guide which are generally the rule of action. I do not mean to exclude altogether the idea of patriotism. I know it exists, and I know it has done much in the present contest: but I will venture to assert, that a great and lasting war can never be supported on this principle alone. It must be aided by a prospect of interest or some reward. For a time it may of itself push men to action, to bear much, to encounter difficulties, but it will not endure unassisted by interest.—Without

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arrogance, or the smallest deviation from truth, it may 1778 be said, that no history now extant, can furnish an instance of an army's suffering such uncommon hardships as ours has done, and bearing them with the same patience and fortitude. To see men without clothes to cover their nakedness, without blankets to lie on, without shoes, (so that their marches might be traced by the blood from their feet) and almost as often without provision as with, marching through frost and snow, and at Christmas taking up their winter quarters within a day's march of the enemy, without a house or hut to cover them, till they could be built, and submitting to it without a murmur, is a mark of patience and obedience, which, in my opinion, can scarce be paralleled." Within a week after, congress resolved that there should be a provision of half pay for the life of the officers; but then they further resolved, "That nothing contained in the foregoing resolution shall be construed to extend to prevent the United States from redeeming, at any time, the half pay of such officers as they judge proper, by paying them a sum equal to six years half pay." But before these resolves were passed, between two and three hundred officers had resigned their commissions, reckoning from last August.

General Washington being desirous of effecting an exchange of prisoners, wrote to congress, on the 7th of March—"It may be thought contrary to our interest to go into an exchange, as the enemy would derive more immediate advantage from it than we should: but on principles of genuine extensive policy, independent of the consideration of compassion and justice, we are under an obligation not to elude it. An event of this kind

1778 is the general wish of the country. I know it to be the wish of the army, and it must be the ardent wish of the unhappy sufferers themselves. Should the exchange be deferred, till the terms of the last resolve of congress on the subject are fulfilled, it will be difficult to prevent our being generally accused with a breach of good faith. Speculative minds may consider all our professions as mere professions, or at best, that interest and policy are to be the only arbiters of their validity. I cannot doubt that congress, in preservation of the public faith and my personal honor, will remove all impediments, that now oppose themselves to my engagements, and will authorize me, through commissioners, to settle as extensive and competent a cartel as may appear advantageous and necessary, any resolutions heretofore to the contrary notwithstanding." Congress in a few days removed the impediment, by resolving that he might proceed in the exchange of prisoners without waiting for the settlement and the discharge of their accounts: but no cartel has been agreed upon. Commissioners were appointed on both sides, and held several meetings, without effecting the business. This led congress to resolve, on the 21st of April—"That congress are sincerely desirous of settling a cartel for the exchange of prisoners, on principles of justice, humanity, and mutual advantage, and agreeable to the customary rules and practice of war among civilized nations, and that they lament the obstacles raised by gen. Howe and his commissioners during the negotiations held for this desirable purpose." However, partial exchanges of individuals have taken place, and will be continued. When major Otho Williams was exchanged, he sent a letter to American head quarters,

ters, relating how the prisoners had been treated at New York, and then said—"Before I conclude, permit me to acknowledge to you and the world, that I am much obliged to Daniel Chamier esq; auditor general, for lending me money; to doctor Richard Huddleston of the seventh British regiment, for several offices of kindness to myself and other prisoners, and that I was treated in a very courteous genteel manner by major Ackland of the twentieth, for whom I was exchanged."

In January, congress concluded upon a winter's irruption into Canada, and appointed the marquis de la Fayette, gens. Conway and Stark to conduct it. The two former repaired to Albany, and were afterward joined by baron de Kalb. But in a while, the expedition was dropt, for want of men, money, clothing, sleighs, provisions and forage: and on the 22d of April, Conway requested leave to resign his commission, which was granted. Baron de Steuben, who arrived the beginning of December, with sundry letters of recommendation to congress, and was desired by them to repair to gen. Washington's quarters, soon succeeded him as inspector general. The same day Conway's resignation was accepted, on the 28th of April, Washington wrote to congress—"I can be no longer silent as to the merits of baron de Steuben. I consider him as an acquisition to the service, and recommend him to the attention of congress." May the 5th, it was resolved, "That congress approve gen. Washington's plan for the institution of a well organized inspectorship: That baron Steuben be appointed to the office of inspector general, with the rank and pay of major general; his pay to commence from the time he joined the army and entered into the

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service

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1778. service of the United States: That there be two ranks of inspectors, under the direction of the inspector general, the first to superintend two or more brigades, and the other to be charged with the inspection of one brigade: That gen. Washington be authorized to appoint such persons to be inspectors and brigade inspectors for the main army, as he shall think best qualified to execute the several duties of those offices." The commander in chief and the baron being in perfect unison, the discipline of the army has been mightily improved, and the exercise of the battalions has become uniform: In order to establish these points, the officers were formed into a body, and when completely exercised and instructed, were put upon doing the like by their men. When the baron manœuvred the battalions, the brigades, the divisions, or the army, he explained matters to the respective commanding officers, and taught them to understand the meaning and intention of the various movements. The office of inspector general was one of the regulations in view for the reform of the army, some time before Conway's appointment: and the foreign officers, who had no commissions, and no commands, and who were of ability, were to have been recommended, and particularly baron D'Arendt, with whom the idea originated.

The sufferings of the army for want of provision, led the congress to think at length of changing the commissary general; they therefore directed the president to write to col. Jeremiah Wadsworth of Connecticut, requesting his attendance on matters of consequence. When informed of his arrival, they appointed a committee of four to confer with him, and inquire whether

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he would undertake the office of commissary general of purchases. The colonel was not a stranger to the nature of the business, nor the way in which it was necessary to conduct it, for the service of the army. He considered the matter thoroughly; laid his own plan; and informed the committee upon what terms he would undertake the conducting of that department: from these he would not recede. He would not be tied up by any regulating acts, but would be left at liberty to purchase as he was able. After repeated conferences, "Congress proceeded to the election of a commissary general of purchases, and the ballots being taken, Jeremiah Wadsworth esq; was unanimously elected," on the 9th of April. In five days more, upon the resumption of the consideration of the report of the committee appointed to confer with him, they resolved, "That the commissary general of purchases have full power to appoint and remove every officer in his department;" which was followed by various other resolutions, and closed with one declaring, "That all former regulations of congress, relative to the department of the commissary general of purchases, which interfere with the foregoing resolutions, be repealed." Thus they abandoned that plan, which induced their first commissary general, col. Joseph Trumbull, to quit the department, and in its operation, had nearly destroyed their army.

Congress began the year with authorizing a committee to take every necessary measure for the immediate relief of the sick soldiers, and to report whatever alteration in the medical department might be requisite. They soon after recommended it to the clergy of all denominations in the middle district, to solicit charitable donations of

1778. woollens and linens, made or unmade, for the service of the sick; many of whom were lost for want of these articles. They also ordered doctor Shippen, the director general of the hospitals, and doctor Rush, physician general of the middle district, to attend them on the 26th of January. A committee of five upon their arrival was chosen to send for, and to hear them, and to report specially. The afternoon of the 27th, and the next morning, were spent in that service. A gentleman, who could not but know what passed, wrote on the 28th—
 “ Doctor R—— says in a letter, that *one half of the soldiers that died last year, perished by the present medical establishment.*—A shocking black picture indeed doctor Rush painted—but by all accounts it is a just one. It is a very melancholy reflection, that buildings erected for the relief and comfort of the sick and wounded, should become tombs to them. A bad system and a bad administration, have produced great mischiefs in the hospital. Peculation and embezzlement of stores, prevail as much in this department as in others. I do not allege these things without authority or proof. They are facts too well authenticated.” Another, in his correspondence, expressed himself thus upon matters—“ *The wealth of worlds could not support the expence of the medical department alone, above two or three years.* There is but *one* right system for a military hospital, and that is the one made use of by the British army. That would save half a million a year to the continent, and, what is more, would produce perfect satisfaction and happiness.” On the 30th, Dr. Rush requested leave to resign, which was accepted. Congress, on the 6th of February, came to various resolutions, upon the report
 of

of the first committee, for the better regulating, the ¹⁷⁷⁸ hospitals of the United States. On the 25th, Dr. Rush sent a letter from Princeton to gen. Washington, containing a well-attested certificate from Bethlehem, setting forth, that the wine allowed the hospital was so adulterated as to have none of the qualities of Madeira—that none of the patients under the care of the signers eat of venison, poultry, and wild fowl, (unless purchased by themselves) and that large quantities were purchased by the director general—that the director entered the hospital but once during six weeks residence in Bethlehem, though the utmost distress and mortality prevailed—that the sick were too much crowded, and wanted blankets, shirts, straw, and other necessaries—that there died in the place two hundred soldiers (eight-tenths of them by a putrid fever caught in the hospital) within three months. Dr. Rush mentioned, that Dr. Shippen, in the height of the mortality, wrote to congress—"No fatal disease prevails in the hospitals, very few die, and the hospitals are in very good order." He said—"Our director general was employed in selling large quantities of Madeira wine, brown and loaf sugar, &c. (which had been transported through the country in hospital waggons, and secured as hospital stores) under the name of private property." This, and another letter from the doctor, were read in congress, the third of April, when a committee was appointed and directed to inquire into the charges contained in the letters against doctor Shippen and into his conduct as director general, and to report specially to congress. The diminution of the army by sickness has been very great: and you will easily conceive whence it was that no more of the sick recovered. The

1778. sickness of the soldiers, before going to the hospitals, was brought upon them, not altogether through the want of clothes or provision, but of cleanliness in their huts and in the camp. Notwithstanding repeated positive orders enjoining cleanliness, in some places of the camp the stench was intolerable, through the neglect or the want of necessaries.

It has been resolved, that count Pulaski shall raise and have the command of an independent corps, to consist of sixty-eight horse and two hundred foot; the horse to be armed with lances, and the foot equipped in the manner of light infantry.

No mention has been yet made of one capt. Lee of the light dragoons, a bold enterprising young officer, who, if spared, is like to make a considerable figure; but a resolve of congress leads us to notice him. By the twenty-second of last November, he and his little troop had taken a hundred and two of the enemy prisoners. The whole tenor of his conduct during that campaign proved him to be brave and prudent. He rendered essential service to his country, and acquired to himself and the corps he commanded, distinguished honor. The congress, to reward his merit, have resolved, "That capt. H. Lee, be promoted to the rank of major commandant; that he be empowered to augment his present corps by enlistments to two troops of horse, to act as a separate corps." These enlistments are not to be made from among the prisoners. The commander in chief opposes every thing of that kind, and has written—"We have always complained against Howe, and still do, for obliging or permitting the prisoners in his hands to enlist, as an unwarrantable procedure,

cedure. The practice on our part would justify it in 1778.
him. I believe no prisoners have ever been inlisted by
us. I am sure none have through compulsion." But
in the Massachusetts, a number of the convention troops,
upon offering themselves, were inlisted: which occa-
sioned the general's writing, " Burgoyne could hardly
suggest a more effectual plan, for plundering us of so
much money, reinforcing Mr. Howe with so many men,
and preventing us from recruiting a certain number of re-
giments." All the British deserters sent on from this state
as recruits for one regiment, went off to the enemy by the end
of March: and of a detachment of sixty of them, which
marched to join col. Henley's, only twelve or thirteen
reached the camp. Part of the others made their escape,
and the rest formed a plan for the same purpose, mutinied
and were thrown into prison. The conduct of inlisting
the convention troops was sufficiently mortifying; but it
was far more provoking to observe the backwardness of
the states in furnishing the recruits that were wanted.
Instead of the army's being reinforced with eight or ten
thousand troops, it was scarcely joined by so many hun-
dreds, by the twelfth of April.

April
12.

Let us change the subject, and confine ourselves, for
a time, more particularly to the proceedings of congress.

On the 19th of January, they resolved to grant a bra-
vet of lieut. col. to the chevalier de Maduit du Plessis,
as a reward for his services. Gen. Washington recom-
mended him in a letter, adding, that " the gallant con-
duct of this young gentleman at Brandywine, German-
town, and at Fort Mercer, (on the Delaware) entitles
him to the particular notice of congress;" that " he
made several judicious alterations in the works at Red-
bank,

1778. bank, and showed great good conduct during the action, in which the Hessians were repulsed;” and that “after the evacuation was determined on, he became the means of saving some valuable artillery and stores, and cheerfully undertook as volunteer the hazardous operation of blowing up the magazine, &c. without apparatus usually provided upon such occasions;” and concluding with—“he possesses a degree of modesty not always found in men who have performed brilliant actions.”

Two days after, congress, on the report from the board of war, respecting the treatment of the American prisoners in New York and Philadelphia, resolved among other things—“That the allowance of two dollars a week to officers, who are prisoners of war to these United States do cease, unless to those officers who may be entitled thereto by any contract made on or before their captivity or surrender: That in return for permission given to purchase provisions of the American commissaries for the use of the enemy’s prisoners, gen. Washington be directed to demand of gen. Howe, liberty to purchase clothing in such places as may be under his power for the use of the American prisoners: That the commissary general of prisoners and his respective deputies, be forthwith directed to call in all the officers and privates belonging to the enemy, and to confine them in such places, and order them to be subsisted and treated in such manner as shall render their situation similar, in all respects, to that of the officers and privates who are prisoners with the enemy; and that they continue this mode of treatment, till such time as a change of conduct on the part of the enemy shall induce congress, or the commander in chief of the armies of these states,

states, to give directions for a different line of conduct on their part." This threat of retaliation will have little effect upon the British commander; and if no other consideration should prevent, the general humanity of the people would be a bar to its execution. That some different measures ought to be adopted as to the British officers, than what are at present given into, must be admitted upon another account; for they have done much mischief to the American cause. During their captivity, they have formed connections in the country; have confirmed the disaffected; converted many ignorant people; and frightened the lukewarm and timid by their stories of the power of Great Britain.

On the 27th of February, congress resolved, "That whatever inhabitant of these states shall kill, or seize, or take any loyal citizen or citizens thereof, and convey him, her or them, to any place within the power of the enemy, or shall enter into any combination for such purpose, or attempt to carry the same into execution, or hath assisted or shall assist therein; or shall by giving intelligence, acting as a guide, or in any other manner whatever, aid the enemy in the perpetration thereof, he shall suffer death by the judgment of a court-martial, as a traitor, assassin and spy, if the offence be committed within seventy miles of the head quarters of the grand or other armies of these states, where a general officer commands." This resolution has been introduced to show you what a stretch of power congress has been guilty of. They have hereby suspended in particular cases the judicial authority of the Massachusetts state, which is not the seat of war; and subjected certain criminals to a trial by a court-martial, instead of leaving them

1778. them to the laws of the state. At Providence a general officer commands a small army, at the distance of only forty-five miles from Boston. All bodies of fallible men possessed of or claiming power, ought to be narrowly watched, or from good or bad intentions, they will transgress the limits of their constitution, without a real necessity.

Mar. 3. Major general Greene was appointed, on the second of March, quarter-master general, but allowed to retain his rank in the army. The next day, congress, upon the report of a committee, resolved, "That lieut. gen. Burgoyne, on account of his ill state of health, have leave to embark for England by Rhode-Island, or any more expeditious route, with the officers of his family and his servants." He is engaged by parole, in case the embarkation of the convention troops is prolonged beyond the time apprehended, to return to America upon demand and due notice given, and to re-deliver himself into the power of congress, unless regularly exchanged.

Congress have not lost sight of the importance of having the North River and the passes in the Highlands well secured, so as to render any sudden attempt upon Albany by the same impracticable. Had Sir W. Howe, instead of going by sea to Philadelphia, bent his whole force for the mastering of these, as gen. Washington strongly suspected he would do, the independency of the United States must have tottered to the very foundation, if not have been completely subverted. Whether the plan of making the grand diversion southward, originated with the ministry, himself, or a Pennsylvania refugee—by his leaving the troops under Burgoyne to shift for themselves, in case the reinforcement from Europe did not arrive in time,

time, the subjugation of the country may be entirely prevented. Gen. Gates was directed, on the 15th of April, 1778. April 15. to repair forthwith to Fish-kill, and to take the command of all the troops on the North River and in the whole northern department. He was also to take effectual measures to secure the communication between the eastern and southern states, by maintaining the possession of the river; and for that purpose was empowered to provide galleys, gun-boats, fire rafts, chains, caissons and chevaux de Frize, and to erect all necessary fortifications. West Point has for some time been pitched upon as a proper spot; and the troops have begun, and are going on to fortify it. When the works are completed, it will be a much stronger post than fort Montgomery, and is higher up the river, and projects into it. The soldiers, whether militia or continentals, will, according to custom, be employed upon them till finished, without putting the states to any particular charge for labor in erecting them.

Congress were expecting that something would turn up in Europe favorable to America; and were confirmed in their expectation, upon the receipt of a draught of a bill for declaring the intention of the British parliament as to the exercise of their right of imposing taxes on the Americans; as also the draught of a bill to enable the king to appoint commissioners with powers to treat, consult and agree upon the means of quieting certain disorders within the colonies. These draughts were sent from Philadelphia to gen. Washington, who forwarded them to York Town. On the 22d of April congress took them into consideration, and, observing that they had been industriously circulated in a partial

22.

1778, and secret manner, ordered that they should be forthwith printed for the public information: but at the same time took care to counteract their influence by the remarks they published respecting them. They declared their belief, that the parliament would confer on them the usual solemnities of their laws; and then observed, that upon a supposition the matters contained in them should really go into the British statute book, they would serve to show, in a clear point of view, the weakness and wickedness of the enemy: on these they expatiated. This done they said—"It appears evident that the said bills are intended to operate upon the hopes and fears of the good people of these states, so as to create divisions among them, and a defection from the common cause: and that they are the sequel of that insidious plan, which from the days of the stamp-act down to the present time, hath involved this country in contention and bloodshed." Congress went on to pronounce, that if any men or body of men presume to make any separate or partial convention or agreement with the British commissioners, they ought to be considered and treated as open and avowed enemies of the United States. They declared, "That these United States cannot with propriety hold any conference or treaty with any commissioners on the part of Great Britain, unless they shall as a preliminary thereto, either withdraw their fleets and armies, or else in positive and express terms acknowledge the independence of the said states." They then, from an apprehension that it is the design of the enemy to lull them into a fatal security, call upon the states to use the most strenuous exertions to have their respective quotas of continental troops in the field as soon as possible,

fible, and to hold all their militia in readiness to act as ¹⁷⁷⁸ occasion may require. The congress at this period had no knowledge of a treaty's having been entered into by France with their commissioners; but they conjectured that there would be a rupture in Europe between the French and British nations; and to avail themselves of the occasion, and detach the tories from the enemy, they the next day recommended to the states the offering of pardon, under the restrictions that might be thought expedient, to such of their inhabitants or subjects who had levied war against them, or had adhered to the enemy, as should surrender themselves to any civil or military officer of any of the states, or return to the state they belonged to before the 10th of next June. The arrival of the conciliatory bills at New York and Philadelphia, excited equal astonishment and indignation in the royal forces. These thought their personal honor wounded in the recantation now made of all that high language and treatment, which they had been accustomed to hold or to offer to the Americans. The disappointment was the greater, as the bills were the substitute to a reinforcement of twenty thousand men, which they had expected. But the feelings of the numerous body of American refugees is not to be described.

A committee of congress was appointed on the 1st of May, "to inquire into the laws and customs of nations respecting neutrality, and to report whether the conduct of the king of Portugal, in forbidding the vessels of the United States to enter his ports, and ordering those already there to depart at a short day, is not a breach of the laws of neutrality, and will not justify acts of hostility against

1778. against the subjects of the said kingdom." On the third,
May
3. during the Sunday's adjournment, Mr. Simeon Deane, brother to Silas Deane esq; arrived express from France, with sundry important dispatches, whereupon congress was convened, and the dispatches opened and read, among which, to their inconceivable joy, were a treaty of commerce, and a treaty of alliance, concluded between his most Christian majesty the king of France, and the United States of America. The treaties were duly weighed and considered separately the next day, and upon each it was unanimously resolved, "That the same be and is hereby ratified." There was an act separate and secret in the following terms—"The most Christian king declares, in consequence of the intimate union which subsists between him and the king of Spain, that in concluding with the United States of America this treaty of amity and commerce, and that of eventual and defensive alliance, his majesty hath intended and intends to reserve expressly, and he reserves by this present separate and secret act to his said Catholic majesty, the power of acceding to the said treaties, and to participate in their stipulations at such time as he shall judge proper.—It being well understood nevertheless, that if any of the stipulations of the said treaties are not agreeable to the king of Spain, his Catholic majesty may propose other conditions analogous to the principal aim of the alliance, and conformable to the rules of equality, reciprocity and friendship." This act being duly weighed, it was resolved unanimously, "That the same be and is hereby ratified." The next resolution was, "That this congress entertain the highest sense of the magnanimity and wisdom of his most Christian majesty, so strongly

strongly exemplified in the treaty of amity and commerce, and the treaty of alliance; and the commissioners representing these states, at the court of France, are directed to present the grateful acknowledgments of this congress to his most Christian majesty, for his truly magnanimous conduct respecting these states, in the said generous and disinterested treaties, and to assure his majesty, on the part of this congress, it is sincerely wished that the friendship so happily commenced between France and these United States may be perpetual." On the 5th they resolved, "That the commissioners be instructed to inform the court of France, that although congress have readily ratified the treaties and the act separate and secret; yet from a sincere desire of rendering the friendship and alliance so happily begun, permanent and perpetual, and being apprehensive that differences may arise from the 11th and 12th articles in the treaty of amity and commerce, congress are desirous that the said articles may be utterly expunged." Mr. Lee was against admitting these articles, and assigned his reasons to Messrs. Franklin and Deane on the 30th of January; who on the 1st of February wrote to Mr. Gerard, that they concurred in desiring that the same might be omitted, notwithstanding which they were retained. You will not expect me to delineate the inexpressible satisfaction that the report of these treaties spread through the United States. The people were in raptures. The several brigades of the army, by gen. Washington's orders, assembled in the morning of the 6th, when their chaplains communicated the intelligence, offered up a thanksgiving, and delivered a discourse suitable to the occasion. They were then formed into two lines, when their

1778. teen cannon were discharged; at the firing of the last, a running fire of infantry began on the right, and continued through the whole front line; it was then taken up on the left of the second line, and continued to the right. A signal was given, and the whole army huzzaed, "Long live the king of France." The artillery fired as before, which was succeeded by a second general discharge of all the musketry in a running fire, and by a "Long live the friendly European powers." The military ceremony was reiterated, and closed with an huzza "for the American states." The remainder of the day passed away in universal joy and gladness. Every American will soon have, from the publication of the treaties, an opportunity of learning their contents; meanwhile congress have recommended to all, "to consider the subjects of his most Christian majesty as their brethren and allies, and to behave toward them with the friendship and attention due to the subjects of a great prince, who with the highest magnanimity and wisdom hath treated with these United States on terms of perfect equality and mutual advantage, thereby rendering himself the protector of the rights of mankind."

The congress, after receiving the treaties, had a stronger feeling of their own importance than before, and resolved, "That the commissioners appointed for the courts of Spain, Tuscany, Vienna, and Berlin, should live in such stile and manner at their respective courts as they may find suitable and necessary to support the dignity of their public character." They elected Ralph Izard esq; commissioner for the court of Tuscany; and William Lee esq; for the courts of Berlin and Vienna. On

May
8.

the 8th they agreed to a draught of "An address to the

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inhabitants of the United States of America." In it '77th they recapitulate in a masterly and affecting manner the occurrences and state of the three preceding years. Their language is calculated to seize and lead the passions captive at pleasure. When they come to the French treaties, they say—"You have still to expect one severe conflict. Your foreign alliances, though they secure your independence, cannot secure your country from desolation, your habitations from plunder, your wives from insult or violation, nor your children from butchery. Foiled in the principal design, you must expect to feel the rage of disappointed ambition. Arise then! to your tents! and gird you for battle. It is time to turn the headlong current of vengeance upon the head of the destroyer. They have filled up the measure of their abominations, and like fruit must soon drop from the tree. Although much is done, yet much remains to do. Expect not peace, while any corner of America is in possession of your foes. You must drive them away from this land of promise, a land flowing indeed with milk and honey. Your brethren at the extremities of the continent, already implore your friendship and protection. It is your duty to grant their request. They hunger and thirst after liberty. Be it yours to dispense to them the heavenly gift. And what is there now to prevent it?" They afterward hold up to their view—the sweets of a free commerce with every part of the earth, soon to reimburse them for all the losses they have sustained;—the full tide of wealth to flow in upon their shores, free from the arbitrary impositions of those, whose interest and whose declared policy it is to check their growth;—and the nourishing and fostering of their in-

1778. terefts by governments, whose power will be derived from their grant; and that will therefore be obliged, by the influence of cogent necessity, to exert it in their favor. They close with—"It is to obtain these things that we call for your strenuous, unremitted exertions. Yet do not believe that you have been, or can be saved, merely by your own strength. No! it is by the assistance of Heaven; and this you must assiduously cultivate by acts which Heaven approves. Thus shall the power and happiness of these sovereign, free, and independent states, founded on the virtue of their citizens; increase, extend and endure, until the Almighty shall blot out all the empires of the earth." That this animated, but in some instances, extravagant address, might have its full operation, and to the utmost extent, they recommended to ministers of the gospel, of all denominations, the reading or the causing of it to be read, immediately after divine service, to the inhabitants of the United States, in their respective churches and chapels, and other places of religious worship. A week after, they resumed the subject of making an allowance to officers after the war, and then resolved unanimously, "That all military officers commissioned by congress, who now are or hereafter may be in the service of the United States, and shall continue therein during the war, and not hold any office of profit under these states or any of them, shall, after the conclusion of the war, be entitled to receive annually for the term of seven years, if they live so long, one half of the present pay of such officers; provided that no general officer of the cavalry, artillery or infantry, shall be entitled to receive more than the one half part of the pay of a colonel of such corps; and provided that

this

May
15.

this resolution shall not extend to any officer, unless he shall have taken an oath of allegiance to and shall actually reside within some one of the United States." 1778.

All later proceedings of congress must be deferred till another opportunity.

On April the twenty-fifth, the Massachusetts assembly sent a letter to congress giving the reasons why they refrained from passing the regulating act, viz. their apprehensions that it could not be carried into execution, and that it would be attended with the most fatal consequences. They have passed an act for prescribing and establishing an oath of fidelity and allegiance. Persons refusing it, are to be sent off by order of council, within forty days after such refusal, to some port in the dominions of the king of Great Britain.

The declaration of independence made it necessary for the South Carolinians to new model their temporary form of government. The inhabitants, instead of choosing delegates to meet in convention for that business, intrusted their representatives with it; and the elections in every part of the state were conducted on the idea, that the members chosen, over and above the ordinary powers of legislators, should have that of framing a new constitution. Thus authorized, in January 1777, they entered upon the business. They did not proceed to give a final sanction to their deliberations; but the model they had agreed to was printed in the form of a bill, and submitted to the examination of the people at large for the space of a year. Such was the prevailing approbation, that when it came before the legislature, the general assembly and legislative-council proceeded in

1778. March 1778, to give it a final sanction in the form of a law; and presented it to president Rutledge for his assent. He refused passing it, and gave his reasons in a speech addressed to both houses. He urged the oath he had taken to preside according to the constitution agreed to by the representatives in 1776; that the bill offered to him annihilated one branch of the legislature, and transferred the right of electing another branch from the general assembly to the people, and that nothing appeared clearer to him than that they had not lawful power so to do. He observed, that the good of the people being the end of government, that is the best form under which they are happiest; and that they are the fittest judges of what will be most productive of their happiness. He surmised that "The people preferred a compounded or mixed government to a simple democracy, or one verging toward it, perhaps because, however unexceptionable democratic power may appear at the first view, its effects have been found arbitrary, severe and destructive, "Certain it is," said he, "that systems which, in theory have been much admired, on trial have not succeeded; and that projects and experiments relative to government are of all schemes the most dangerous and fatal." He concluded his address with resigning the office of president and commander in chief into their hands, and requesting them to accept it and elect some person in his stead. A majority of their suffrages were in favor of the honorable Arthur Middleton; but he had his difficulties as to passing the bill, and declined the office. The honorable Rawlins Lowndes was soon after elected, and on the 19th of March

March gave his assent to the bill containing the new 1778.
constitution.

Some weeks before this law was passed, the Randolph frigate of 36 guns and 305 men, commanded by capt. Biddle, sailed on a cruise from Charlestown. The Yarmouth of 64 guns discovered her and five other vessels, in the evening of the 7th of March, and came up with her by nine o'clock at night. Capt. Vincent hailed her to hoist colours, or he would fire into her, on which she hoisted American, and immediately gave the Yarmouth her broadside, which was returned, and in about a quarter of an hour she blew up. Four men were saved upon a piece of her wreck, and subsisted for five days upon nothing more than rain water, which they sucked from a piece of blanket they had picked up. On the fifth, the Yarmouth being in chace of a ship, happily discovered them waving; the captain humanely suspended the chace, hauled up to the wreck, got a boat out, and brought them on board †. Three days before this, the Alfred frigate of 20 nine pounders was taken by the Ariadne and Ceres. The Americans have also lost the Virginia frigate.

The crew of an American privateer, in the night of the 27th of January, took the fort of New Providence, being joined by a number of Americans in the place. They continued two days in possession of it, during which time they made themselves masters of a ship of 16 guns, that was repairing some damage sustained by running on a reef of rocks. They likewise possessed themselves of five prizes that had been sent in by a letter of marque. The letter of marque

* Dr. Ramsay's History, vol. i. p. 129—138. † Captain Vincent's letter of March the 17th. Remembrancer, vol. vi. p. 143.

1778. returned, prepared to attack, and got very near the privateer, when she cut her cables and sailed off, having about half an hour before sent away the ship and three of the prizes, and set fire to the other two.

Captain James Willing, in the service of the United States, arrived with a detachment of men from fort Pitt at the Natches, a British settlement in West Florida, on the evening of the 19th of February; and the next morning early sent out sundry parties, who almost at one and the same time made the inhabitants prisoners of war on their parole. The colours of the United States being hoisted, and the country taken possession of in their name, the inhabitants fearing the confiscation of their property, waited on capt. Willing to propose terms of accommodation, to which he readily agreed. They are not to take arms against the United States, or to assist their enemies; but are to observe a strict neutrality. During such neutrality, their persons, slaves, and other property, of what kind soever, are to remain safe and unmolested; but the property of all public officers of the British crown is excepted, as also the property of all British, who are not residents in the district. The agreement was signed by the delegates from the people and their associates, on the one part, and by the captain on the other, the 21st of February.

Since the earliest return of spring, a succession of detachments from gen. Howe's army have ranged the country for many miles round Philadelphia and in the Jerseys, chiefly to open the communication for bringing in supplies, and to collect forage. They have been pretty successful. But col. Hand, in answer to col. Mawhood, charged his troops not only with denying quarter,

quarter, but butchering the Americans who surrendered 1778: prisoners, and bayonetting, on the 21st of March, in the most cruel manner, in cold blood, men who were taken by surprise, when they neither could nor did attempt to make any resistance, and some of whom were not fighting men. The successful surprise of a party of Americans, consisting of some hundreds, posted about seventeen miles from the city, took place on the 4th of May. On the 7th, the second battalion of British light infantry, in flat boats, attended by three galleys and other armed boats, proceeded up the Delaware, in order to destroy all the American ships and vessels lying in the river between Philadelphia and Trenton. They landed the next morning; advanced toward Bordentown; drove the Americans that opposed them; entered the town, and burnt four store-houses, containing provisions, tobacco, some military stores and camp equipage. The country being alarmed, and a strong body collected, the battalion crossed to the Pennsylvania shore. The next day they resumed their operations, and at sun-set embarked and returned to Philadelphia. While upon the expedition, they burnt two frigates, one of 32 guns, the other of 28,—nine large ships—three privateer sloops of 16 guns each—three of 10—twenty-three brigs, with a number of sloops and schooners. Two of the ships were loaded with tobacco, rum and military stores.

Thus ends, most probably, the history of gen. Howe's successes in North America; for Sir Henry Clinton arrived at Philadelphia on the 8th of May, to succeed the former, who will soon return to Great Britain.

The British officers, to express their esteem for Sir William Howe, prepared a magnificent entertainment, with

1778. with which to grace his departure for Great Britain. It consisted of a variety of parts, on land and water; was called the Mischianza, and was given on Monday the May 18. 18th of May. It was indeed magnificent, began at four in the afternoon, and concluded at four the next morning. There was a grand and beautiful exhibition of fire works; toward the conclusion of which, a triumphal arch appeared gloriously illuminated, with Fame blowing from her trumpet in letters of light—"Thy laurels shall never fade." This prediction would be more likely to receive a fulfilment, had the military achievements of the general been more answerable to the force he has commanded against the Americans. The American officers planned a different entertainment for him; which had proved fatal to themselves, but for the oversight of one British general.

The marquis de la Fayette, with a select corps of about 2500 men, rank and file, crossed the Schuylkill, and proceeded to take post at Barron-hill, about twelve miles in front of the army at Valley-forge. He planted his piquets and videttes, and sent out patrols on all the roads by which it was probable the enemy would approach him. About two miles on his left was White-marsh, where a number of roads form a junction. The marquis intrusted the guard of these roads to some militia, whom he ordered there, but who never went. A quaker inferring from the marquis's directing him to provide lodgings for the night, that he intended remaining there, sent information of it to the enemy, who by their spies having obtained intelligence of the marquis's situation, formed an instantaneous design of surprising him. For that purpose, on the night of May the

the 19th, gen. Grant marched out of Philadelphia with 1778. full 7000 men, and a number of cannon. By taking the Franckfort road, and crossing the country through the old York road and White-marsh, the next morning he entered the road on which the marquis was, about 20. two miles in his rear, at Plymouth meeting-house. From this place to Matson's-ford on the Schuylkill is about one mile and a quarter, the only ford by which the marquis could effect a retreat, and about two miles from Barron-hill church. Other troops were advancing to take the marquis in front, and co-operate with gen. Grant; who instead of hastening to and securing the ford, marched down toward the marquis on the main road, by which mean the latter gained intelligence of the other's being in his rear. The marquis happily by an instant decision retreated by the road leading from Barron-hill church to Matson's-ford, and had nearly effected his retreat over the Schuylkill before the enemy were sensible of their error. They then doubled their pace to come up with his rear; but his retreat was so handsome and timely, that the troops were all crossed and formed before they could come near the ford in force. His whole loss was no more than nine men. The American army had early information of the marquis's danger, and were in great anxiety about him. They began firing some of their heaviest artillery, hoping that the wind being fair, the sound would be conveyed to the enemy in such a manner as to excite mistaken apprehensions; which they think was the case, as the enemy after the marquis had crossed, made a precipitate march back to Philadelphia, seemingly under an apprehension that they should be pursued and attacked by

1778. by the whole army. Had gen. Grant marched down at once to Matson's-ford, and secured it, the marquis with his select corps, must have surrendered or been cut to pieces. Their loss would have obliged the rest of the American army to have made an hasty flight, in a most distressing situation, the chief of them being without shoes and stockings, and otherwise badly provided. The orderly manner in which the Americans retreated, and which contributed much to their escaping, is to be ascribed to the improvements made in their discipline, owing greatly to the baron de Steuben, the inspector general.

LETTER III.

Rotterdam, June 20, 1778.

FRIEND GORDON,

1777. **Y**OU will not be surpris'd at seeing from whence this is dated; nor be at a loss to account for my removal. The present residence will be more favorable to general intelligence than Great Britain, as it affords an opportunity of visiting and hearing from Paris without danger. My last year's letter closed with the account of capt. Cunningham's having taken the packet for Holland, in the beginning of May 1777. The captain and his crew were committed to prison for some

irregu-

irregularities; and to save appearances were continued there for a short time by the French; but were speedily released from their mock confinement, and permitted to purchase and fit out a much stronger vessel, avowedly to infest the British commerce. Mr. Hodge, whom you know, was committed also to the Bastille, at the request of lord Stormont, for having acted publicly as Cunningham's agent, in fitting out the privateer that took the Prince of Orange packet. While in the Bastille he was treated with the utmost politeness and civility; and entertained in the most elegant manner. But the American commissioners being dissatisfied with his confinement, and expressing themselves in strong terms upon the subject, he was released, that the harmony between the French and Americans might not suffer an interruption.

Upon some reports tending to discourage the French commerce with the Americans, Mr. de Sartine, minister of the marine, assured the several chambers of commerce by a public instrument, signed the 4th of July 1777, and in-direct contravention to all the British navigation laws, that the king was determined to afford the fullest protection to their commerce, and would reclaim all ships taken under that pretext. Still the policy of Versailles prevented France's being hurried into a rupture. She determined to risk no decisive step, till the issue of the American campaign was known, her sailors were returned from the Newfoundland fishery, and her naval equipments were completed. Therefore when the British ministry made heavy complaints, attended with menaces, on account of the many prizes carried into the French ports by the American privateers,

1777. teers, and there disposed of, as also of the countenance and protection given to the said privateers, he granted lord Stormont an order for all of them to depart immediately.

The news of gen. Burgoyne's success at Tyconderoga and advance toward Albany, excited the greatest triumph on the side of administration. The promising prospect of the northern expedition's answering fully the wishes of ministry, enabled them to press France harder than ever; and dictated to the latter greater pliability and complaisance. Express orders were sent to Nantz, and all the other parts of the kingdom, forbidding the admittance of any American privateers, unless they entered in order to refit, or were driven in by stress of weather or want of provisions, and in either of these cases they were to be gone as soon as possible. "Notwithstanding all this parade, privateers come in, tarry and take military stores; and their prizes are publicly sold, but as formerly practised after similar complaints, at the mouth of the harbour to people who go off in boats to buy them; and are then brought in and unloaded. Lord Stormont hears of it, flies to court, complains and threatens afresh: the court storms at and threatens its officers; the officers make their excuses; and the affair is soon hushed up, or terminates in a tedious controversy, by which the wished-for time is gained." Before the subject of shipping is dropped, let it be noted that the king's cruisers have taken several American vessels and privateers, and retaken some of their prizes; and will be likely soon to check the progress of American success in naval operations on the European coasts.

By

By the beginning of November, advices were received ^{1777.} of the Bennington action, the failure of St. Leger's expedition against Fort Stanwix, and Burgoyne's first engagement. These advices overthrew, in a great measure, the sanguine expectations that had been formed of speedily reducing the colonies; and were a bad prelude to the meeting of parliament, which took place the 20th ^{Nor.} of November. ^{20.} The royal speech was in the usual tone, but mentioned an augmentation of the naval force, considering that the armaments in the ports of France and Spain continued. It concluded with a resolution of pursuing the measures in which administration was engaged. When the address of the commons was before the house, the marquis of Granby proposed an amendment, and that his majesty should be requested to adopt measures for accommodating the differences with America, and that a cessation of hostilities should be recommended. It was strenuously supported by the opposition on the following grounds, that three years war, at an immense expence, with 55,000 land forces, and 100 ships of war, had only left the nation in nearly the same situation as when it began. They had lost Boston, and had gained New York: and every hope of obtaining a revenue from America had been long over. The country gentlemen were unusually blank: they saw not only an end to all their expectations of an American revenue; but found themselves saddled, with the burden of a war, infinitely more ruinous than any other in which the nation had ever been involved. Some of the ministerial party however, threw out hints for their consolation, that America when subdued would be taxed. Mr. Hartley mentioned in the debate, that there was one ray of hope left

1777. left to the British, if they had wisdom to seize the opportunity of opening a treaty with the Americans, while these were discontented with the cool and dilatory proceedings of the court of France. After all that could be advanced by opposition, the amendment was rejected by a majority of 243 against 86. The earl of Chatham moved for an amendment in the house of lords. He was for bringing about an accommodation with the Americans by a treaty, and rested the stress of his argument upon this point, that the house of Bourbon was upon the eve of breaking with us. His motion was rejected by 97 to 28.

When the news of the Saratoga convention reached France, and was communicated to the court of Versailles by the American commissioners, the latter were almost instantly received and publicly treated in that character. The capture of Burgoyne's army convinced the French, that the American opposition to Great Britain, was not owing to a faction, a few leading men that had gotten into power, but that the body of the people must be engaged, and that they were numerous, or that they could not have made such an effort as not only to have stopped a conquering army, but to have captivated it. It was therefore determined by a majority of the French court, to take the Americans by the hand, and to acknowledge their independence. They knew that Great Britain could not subdue, though they might distress France; and that if the United States would persevere, these must at length establish their independence in connection with France, though they might be reduced to greater difficulties than they had already felt. The marquis de la Fayette's correspondence with his family and friends, undoubtedly

doubtedly proved influential in procuring the determination. His letters were eagerly sought after; and counteracted those prejudices that were raised by several Frenchmen, who returned from America in disgust. His sentiments were imbibed from their being frequently confirmed by events. The American cause being now popular in his native country, and the French court having adopted it, they cannot longer resent the early part he took in it, notwithstanding the offence given at the moment by his disobedience and departure.

Such is the present state of the contest between Great Britain and the Americans, that it will more than ever suffice to give you a few occasional hints upon the parliamentary debates respecting it. In one that took place on the 2d of December, a federal commercial union was talked of by some, as the only hope left with regard to America; but reprobated by ministry. Mr. Fox moved for laying certain papers before the commons: while the matter was debating, intelligence was received, that a similar motion had been complied with in the house of lords, by the lords in administration agreeing to it; and yet such was the influence of the ministry in the house of commons, that Mr. Fox's motion was, in a manner which in other seasons would have been deemed incredible, rejected upon a division of 178 to 89.

The succeeding day was marked by the disclosure of the melancholy catastrophe of Burgoyne's expedition—³ a disclosure, which excited no less grief and astonishment in both houses, than dismay on the side of the ministers, who were bitterly reproached upon the occasion. The business relating to the pecuniary supplies being finished, and little short of nine millions voted for the service of

1777. the ensuing year, by the 10th of December, an adjourn-
 Dec. ment to the 20th of January, was that day moved for
 30. on the side of ministry, and after considerable debates
 carried in both houses.

12. Two days after, the American commissioners at Paris, finding all attempts to establish a cartel with lord Stormont ineffectual, transmitted a letter to lord North, couched in strong terms of complaint, on the subject of the rigorous treatment exercised toward the American prisoners. It contained a particular charge, which has not been publicly refuted, that a number of them were in a state of bondage, on the coasts of Africa and in the East Indies, being compelled to submit to that condition, under the menaces of an immediate and ignominious death.

16. On the 16th, Mr. Gerard delivered to the American commissioners the preliminaries of a treaty between France and America. The same conveyance that brought an account of the Saratoga convention to the commissioners, and the letter to Dr. Fothergill, brought also a letter from the Rev. Dr. Cooper of Boston to Dr. Franklin, in which was mentioned the opinion given in the one to Dr. Fothergill: before this last was sent to England, care was taken to open and procure a copy of it for the commissioners. Dr. Cooper's letter was long and full, contained much information, and urged that France should step forward at once in the cause of America, or that her opportunity of gaining a connection with the United States might be lost. Dr. Franklin communicated it to the French minister, on whom it had a good effect. A number of circumstances, not publicly known, came at the same time to the know-
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ledge of the doctor: they were well adapted to quicken ¹⁷⁷⁷ the court of France, and he improved them to the purpose of showing the importance and necessity of her taking an open and decisive part. The ministry however, were for keeping that part private when taken, as long as convenient to their own nation, and subservient to the general good of both countries.

December the 24th, there was a meeting of merchants ²⁴ at the King's Arms tavern in Cornhill, for the purpose of raising a sum of money to relieve the distress of the American prisoners. A petition from several of these at Portsmouth prison, sent, the 1st of the month, to certain lords and others, was read. The petition sets forth, that admiralty was petitioned the last year in behalf of certain sick prisoners, and the petition disregarded;—that they were about one hundred and forty, in want of warm clothing as well as of almost every comfort, many without shoes and stockings;—that they were under a man, as overseer, void of all humanity, who detains every charitable supply sent by humane neighbours, denies them the common supplies of milk, and allows them neither candle nor fire in that cold season;—that their whole allowance is only eight ounces of meat each man per day, including the bone, and beer that is very small indeed;—and that captains and other officers are penned up altogether like cattle, with the common sailors, and with their own servants. Lord Abingdon had taken up the matter in the house of peers, and moved for accounts relative to their treatment. No relief however was obtained by his effort in parliament; the merchants therefore engaged in the business, and by

1777: the 29th, fourteen hundred and eighty-six pounds six shillings and six-pence was subscribed.

1778. On Saturday, January the 3d, five gentlemen attended
Jan. on the lords of the admiralty, who expressed their ap-
3. probation of the humane motives of the subscribers, and promised official countenance to the application of the money, and to lay the committee under no other restraints than what were necessary for the good order and safe custody of the prisoners. Lord Sandwich, at the time, in the handsomest manner, directed the commissioners of sick and hurt to give immediate orders to the surveyor to erect a temporary building, where the prisoners might have the benefit of a fire in the approaching inclement season.

9. The committee advertised, that the town subscriptions, (independent of the country) amounting to upward of three thousand seven hundred pounds, being fully adequate for the present to the end proposed, the subscription was therefore closed. Subscriptions had been opened at Bristol, Nottingham, in Yorkshire and other places. The whole sum by February the 17th. amounted to four thousand six hundred and forty-seven pounds fifteen shillings, including what had been sent from the country.

During the recess of parliament, measures were pursued by the ministry and their friends for obtaining a body of new troops by a voluntary supply from the people. The towns of Manchester and Liverpoole were leaders in this business; engaged in it with the greatest fervor; and immediately sent to court an offer to raise each a regiment of 1000 men. In other places, public meetings of towns, counties and great corporate bodies,

were

were encouraged, at which resolutions were proposed for 1778 the general levying of men for the service. Much artifice was practised to draw the city of London into the like measure; and the ministerial party, with the chief magistrate at their head (who might have received instruction and encouragement from his superiors) expected to have effected it; but to their astonishment found themselves deserted by the greater part of those who had hitherto regularly obeyed all their mandates respecting elections to city offices.—Such was the effect of the original aversion to the American war, and such the disgust toward ministry on the late unfavorable events. But the chief magistrate would not desist: he suddenly called a court on this business; when they met it was softened 16. down to a proposal for the city to give a bounty for the raising of men for the land and sea service. Warm debates ensued, and the motion was thrown out by a very great majority of the common council. Then followed a resolution condemning in strong terms, the giving of any countenance to, or being in any manner instrumental in the further continuance of the present ruinous and destructive war. The disappointed persons however opened a subscription, “to support the authority of Great Britain over her rebellious colonies in America;” the stile proving offensive, it was changed for the support of king and government: as they were monied men and liberal, 20,000*l.* was soon subscribed.

A similar attempt was made in Bristol, and the event was similar. But a number of names to large sums of money appeared in a private subscription, which rivalled in the amount that at London. Neither of these subscriptions have been found to produce any great effect.

4778. The ministerial measure succeeded no better in the counties. A strong government interest was foiled in Norfolk; and the attempt produced a petition of uncommon force and energy from the freeholders of the county to parliament against the American war.

The measure of raising new regiments was adopted in Scotland with the greatest avidity. The cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, raised a regiment of 1000 men each; and were indulged like Manchester and Liverpool, with the nomination of officers. Several individuals undertook and performed the raising of regiments in the Highlands. The conditions were generally the same, and very advantageous to both the raisers and officers. Several independent companies, amounting to about a regiment in point of number, were raised in Wales; but the battalions, except those of Manchester and Liverpool, were all formed in Scotland.

When the measures of raising men and money came to be debated, a great law lord pronounced the measure of raising troops, without the consent and during the sitting of parliament, to be absolutely illegal, unconstitutional, and a high violation of the fundamental privileges of parliament; and declared that the committees at the London Tavern and at Bristol, who conducted the subscriptions in these cities, had acted a daringly illegal and truly alarming part, having assumed a legislative power, and acted in that capacity, in which, according to the spirit of the constitution, and the express meaning of the bill of rights, parliament only were empowered to act.

The question of benevolences and free gifts did not undergo less discussion, nor their being brought into
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practice incur less censure, than the doctrine of raising ¹⁷⁷³ forces without the participation of parliament. They were declared to have been illegal at all times, and in all the stages of the constitution. It was observed, that the present measure overthrew the only colourable argument ever brought to justify the conduct of parliament in endeavouring to tax the colonies. It had been held out, "That if the colonies, now that they are grown powerful and opulent, should give free grants to the crown, as they have hitherto customarily done upon requisition, the crown may become independent on parliament for supplies." This, it was said, became the constant cry of ministers to amuse and deceive the people, and the cloak to hide their worst designs.

On the 6th of February, the treaties between France Feb. and the United States were signed. The alliance be- ⁶ tween these two powers had not been concluded much more than eight and forty hours before it was known by the British ministry.

Mr. Fox, in a debate five days after, made it appear ¹¹ from different calculations, that the number of men lost to the army, in killed, disabled, deserted, and from various other causes, since the commencement of hostilities, amounted to about twenty thousand.

The duke of Richmond in a committee of the house of lords stated, about the same time, the following facts — That since the commencement of hostilities, the number of vessels belonging to Great Britain and Ireland, taken by American ships of war and privateers, amounted to seven hundred and thirty-three; forty-seven of which had been released, and one hundred and twenty-seven retaken: — That the loss of the remaining five

1778. hundred and fifty-nine appeared from the examination of merchants to have been worth at least two millions and six hundred thousand pounds :—That of two hundred ships employed every year in the African trade, before the present troubles, whose value upon an average was nine thousand pounds each, only forty remained in that branch of trade, which was therefore diminished one million four hundred and forty thousand pounds annually :—and That the number of American ships of war and privateers, amounted to one hundred and seventy-three, carrying two thousand five hundred and fifty-six guns, and about fourteen thousand seamen. Lord Sandwich, on the other side, stated the number of American prizes that had been taken at nine hundred and four, which he estimated at two thousand pounds each, making altogether one million eight hundred and eight thousand pounds ; to which he added the value of the fisheries, from which the Americans were excluded, and then fixed the damage they had sustained at two millions two hundred thousand pounds. Upon another occasion the duke stated the extraordinary war-expences of each of the four last years separately ; and the whole being ascertained, as near as could be possibly done for the present, amounted to the gross sum of twenty-three millions eight hundred ninety-four thousand seven hundred and ninety-two pounds. He showed also that was a pacification to take place, no less than nine millions more would be requisite to bring all matters relating to the war to a final settlement.

Feb. Lord North introduced his conciliatory propositions.

17. His plan was to enable the crown to appoint commissioners to treat with the colonies concerning the means

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of putting an end to the present contest between them ^{1778.} and Great Britain. Five persons were to be invested with ample powers; and authorized to treat with congress as a lawful assembly, representing America—with any of the provincial assemblies—and with any individuals. They were to be empowered to order a suspension of arms; to suspend the operation of laws; and to grant pardons, immunities and rewards. The title of Independent States might be allowed till the treaty had been ratified by the king and parliament. The commissioners were to negotiate, upon a re-union of the empire, for a reasonable contribution to its common exigencies; but this demand was not to be insisted on, and to be given up rather than not terminate the quarrel. His lordship said in his speech, that Sir W. Howe had been, in the late actions and in the whole course of the campaign, not only in the goodness of troops, and in all manner of supplies, but also in point of numbers, much superior to the American army which opposed him in the field: that gen. Burgoyne had been in numbers, until the affair at Bennington, near twice as strong as the army of the enemy: that he promised a great army should be sent out; and that a great army had accordingly been sent out, to the amount of 60,000 men and upward. The speech was long, able and eloquent, and kept him up two full hours. A dull melancholy silence for some time succeeded. It was heard with profound attention; but without a single mark of approbation. Astonishment, dejection and fear, overclouded the whole assembly. It was conjectured, that some powerful motive had induced ministry to adopt such an alteration of measures. The idea was confirmed by the positive assertion

1778. sersion of Mr. Fox, that a treaty had been signed at Paris, between the colonies and France, by which she recognised their independence. Some of the country gentlemen being piqued at lord North's having said, that "they had not been misled or deceived," rose with great warmth, and asserted with indignation, that they had been grossly deceived and misled by the uniform language of government for three years past. In general the party declared, that as the point of taxation, which could be the only rational ground of the war, was now given up, peace should be procured by any mean, and in the speediest manner."

His lordship should have early attended to the hints contained in the letter to Dr. Fothergill, which the doctor got transcribed and sent him, but the minister thought the doctor's correspondent too sanguine. The intimation that a foreign power might interfere, should have produced a determination to treat immediately—a message to the American commissioners assuring them of it—and the introduction, if possible the passing of the conciliatory bills, before the delivery of the preliminaries to the commissioners on the 16th of December: Mar. 2. whereas they were not passed till the 2d of March.

The day before the conciliatory propositions were introduced, a particular incident happened in the house of lords. After the Saratoga convention, gen. Gates wrote a very pathetic and interesting letter to the earl of Thanet, with whom he had formerly lived upon a footing of great intimacy. It related chiefly to the situation of affairs between Great Britain and America. He lamented the misfortunes that had befallen his native country, and the danger to which it was exposed; and then

stated the necessity of speedily applying the only remedy ¹⁷⁷⁸ remaining, for the cure of the many evils that afflicted or threatened Great Britain. This remedy he declared to be an acknowledgment of American independence, which he said the United States never would part with. "A wise minister," he added, "by rescinding the resolutions passed to support that system which no power on earth can establish, will endeavour to preserve so much of the empire in prosperity and honor, as the circumstances of the times, and the mal-administration of those who ruled before him, have left to his government. The United States of America are willing to be the friends, but never will submit to be the slaves of the parent country. They are by consanguinity, by language, and by the affection which naturally springs from these, more attached to England than to any other country under the sun. Therefore spurn not the blessing which yet remains; instantly withdraw your fleets and armies; cultivate the commerce and friendship of America. Thus, and thus only, can England hope to be great and happy. Seek that in a commercial alliance; seek it ere it be too late; for there only you must expect to find it." The earl of Thanet produced this letter in the house; and after some controversy it was read; and the duke of Richmond moved that it should lie upon the table. The motion was rejected after a warm debate, to the concern of several, who flattered themselves that the letter might have afforded an opening to a favorable accommodation.

The French ambassador delivered a rescript to lord ¹³ Weymouth, in which he informed the court of London, that the king had signed a treaty of friendship and commerce

1778. merce with the United States of America. The knowledge of this transaction was communicated under the parade of cultivating the good understanding subsisting between France and Great Britain; and was accompanied with a declaration, that the contracting parties have paid great attention not to stipulate any exclusive advantages in favor of France; and that the United States have reserved the liberty of treating with every nation whatever, upon the same footing of equality and reciprocity. The rescript concludes with an intimation, that the French king being determined to protect effectually the lawful commerce of his subjects, and to maintain the dignity of his flag had, in consequence, taken eventual measures for these purposes, in concert with the United States of America. No sooner was the account conveyed to the French court, of the immediate effects which the delivery of the rescript seemed to have produced in London, than orders were issued for the seizure of all the British vessels in any of the French ports. The example was followed by a similar order in Great Britain. But there were few ships in the ports of either. The French are still for preserving certain appearances, and therefore the king's ordinance, affording new and extraordinary advantages to the captors of prizes, although signed on the 28th of March, is kept dormant, without publication or effect.

Mar. The reception of this rescript was notified by the minister to the house of commons on the 17th. The notice was accompanied with a message from the king, intimating that he should be under the necessity of resenting so unprovoked and so unjust an aggression on the honor of his crown and the essential interests of his kingdom,

dom, and expressing his firm confidence on the zealous and affectionate support of his faithful people. An address was moved for in answer to it, to assure the king of the readiness of his people to stand by him in asserting the dignity of his crown, and the honor of the nation, and to submit with cheerfulness and spirit to the expences that would be requisite for this necessary purpose; and was carried after a long debate. In the house of lords, the debates upon the like occasion were attended with an acrimony of language, and a freedom of thought, that seemed to scorn all restraint. In the course of them it was said in substance—"The treatment we have received from France is mortifying; but if we are wise, we shall suppress our resentment at the present hour, and reserve it for a more convenient opportunity. In the continual vicissitude of political events on the continent of Europe, we need not wait long for a favorable occasion of returning the blow given us by France in the present instance. Nor let us forget, that we have ourselves, on former occasions, acted a part similar to that of which we now so grievously complain. When the Seven United Provinces of the Netherlands threw off the yoke of Spain, England befriended them in the same manner France does now the United States of America. When France was torn by civil dissensions, we made it our business to interfere, and to espouse the cause of one of the parties. The frequency of the practice has rendered it a common rule of European politics. Every nation is watchful of what passes among its neighbours, to the well known intent of profiting by their divisions. It was by a strict and constant observance of this maxim, that some of the greatest princes and ministers

1778. ministers had made so splendid a figure. Queen Elizabeth in England, and cardinal Richlieu in France, had ruled with so much prosperity, and risen to such fame, by never losing sight of it. The safest way of revenging ourselves, will be by following their example." The question for an address was carried by a majority of nearly three to one.

Mar. 21. A public audience and reception was given to the American commissioners, Messrs. Franklin, Deane and Lee, by the French monarch. They were introduced by Monsr. Vergennes, and received by the king with the usual formalities and ceremonials. This striking acknowledgment of the plenipotentiaries from the United States, must have mortified the ministry and crown of Great Britain; and may be pronounced the political phenomenon of Europe. The day before it was exhibited, the French ambassador, in consequence of orders to quit London, set out for Paris.

An inquiry into the state of the nation had been proposed some time back, and continued with unabated assiduity in both houses. In the house of peers, the duke of Richmond, its principal conductor, brought all matters relating to it into a clear and perspicuous arrangement. He at length, on the 7th of April, put an end to that intricate and laborious service, by one of the most resolute and animated speeches ever pronounced in that assembly. He moved for an address to the king, in which a representation of the state of his dominions was given, and the conduct of the ministers severely censured, and his majesty urged to put an end to that system, which had prevailed in his court and administration. He insisted upon it, as he had repeatedly done

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on former occasions, that the only measure of safety was 1778² to recall the British forces from the colonies, and to conclude an accommodation with them upon the most advantageous terms that could be obtained. He would even agree to their independence. Opposition was not however unanimous. The earl of Chatham resisted it with a strength of determination, and a vehemence of speech, that were peculiar. The earl of Shelburne embraced similar sentiments. They jointly protested against any measure that tended to the dismemberment of the empire, and to the acknowledgment of American independence. The latter emphatically styled it the "setting for ever of the British sun." All dangers and all trials were to be encountered sooner than to submit to such a dismemberment. Great Britain was in possession of ample resources to prevent such a disaster. The numbers and spirit of her people, their riches and their strength were greater than her foes suspected, and even than she herself could well ascertain till they had been justly tried. During the debate of the day, the earl of Chatham, while engaged in his eager speech against the acknowledgment of American independence, was seized with that fainting which was the prelude to his death on the eleventh of May, in the seventieth year of his age. He has left behind him the character of one of the greatest orators and statesmen, that this or any other country has ever produced: with the finest opportunities in his hands of acquiring an ample fortune, he left his family destitute of all suitable provision. The house of commons however, to testify their gratitude to him for his important and eminent public services, provided for the payment

1778. ment of his debts, and settled an honorable income upon his posterity.

The duke of Richmond's proposed address was rejected by a great majority. But a protest was signed upon the occasion by twenty peers, wherein they condemned, with the utmost freedom and asperity of language, the design to persist in the measures carried on in the colonies.

April 13. A French squadron, which had for several months been equipping at Toulon, sailed from that port under the command of count d'Estaing. It consisted of twelve ships of the line, and four frigates of superior size. Mr. Silas Deane, and Mr. Gerard, who has been appointed the French minister to congress, were on board. On May 4. the 4th of May authentic intelligence of its sailing arrived at St. James's. Some of the ministers happening to be out of town, the cabinet could not meet till the sixth; when orders and instructions were instantly dispatched to Portsmouth; and on the next day all hands were employed in preparing for the immediate sailing of a powerful squadron. On Friday the 8th the wind changed to the west, and it was not till the 20th, that admirals Byron and Hyde Parker sailed from Portsmouth with twelve ships of the line: but the British ministers not knowing whither count d'Estaing's squadron was destined, nor that Deane and Gerard were on board, they sent an express to stop their final sailing till further orders, so that they put into Plymouth. At length being relieved from their doubts by the 5th of June, they determined to send admiral Byron to America, and at the same time to give him the command on that station, by sending with him, that leave to return which lord

Howe

Howe had desired; and on the 9th the admiral sailed 1778. from Plymouth. Lord Howe had been deceived into his command; had been deceived while in the exercise of it; and being tired and disgusted, had required permission to resign *.

General Burgoyne landed at Portsmouth. On his arrival at London, he soon discovered, that he was no longer an object of court favor. He was refused admission to the royal presence; and from thence experienced all those marks of being in disgrace, which are so well understood, and so quickly perceived by the retainers and followers of courts.

Sir George Saville moved for leave to bring in a bill for the repeal of certain penalties and disabilities provided in an act of the 10th and 11th of William III. entitled an act to prevent the further growth of popery. He proposed that a sufficient test might be formed, by which the papists should bind themselves to the support of the civil government by law established. The motion was received with universal approbation. A bill was brought in and carried through both houses with uncommon unanimity; ministry and opposition vied with each other in activity to forward it; the first considered it as a prelude to the employing of papists in the fleets and armies: that respectable body, who called themselves *old whigs*, took the lead avowedly in support of it; and the bench of bishops co-operated heartily with the other promoters of it: it was passed without a single negative, and received the royal assent on the 27th of May. By this act the clause in the act of William III. for prosecuting of popish bishops, priests or jesuits, is

* Lord Howe in the house of commons,

1778. repealed; also that for subjecting papists keeping schools for the education of youth to perpetual imprisonment; and that likewise, which disables papists from inheriting lands by descent, and gives to the next of kin (being protestants) a right to inherit such lands; beside that which disables papists from purchasing manors, lands or hereditaments, in England or Wales; but the act leaves all lands in possession just as they were, and all causes in litigation, as if it had never been made; and the benefits arising from it, rest on the condition of taking a certain prescribed oath of allegiance within six months of its passing into a law.

May 25. Sir William Meredith observed in the house of commons, that the British ministers had early and complete intelligence of the French preparations at Toulon. He said, that on the 3d of January they had notice of the equipment; on the 8th of February they had advice of the number of ships that was to compose the squadron; and on the 28th of the same month that the crews were all completed; and that they had early information of count d'Estaing's arrival, and of the day on which he intended to sail. He moved, among other matters, that it did not appear to the house, that any orders were sent until the 29th of April, for any fleet of observation, to attend the motions of that from Toulon: but the strength of ministry was too great to admit of its being carried.

June 3. On the 3d of June a period was put to the session of parliament; and on the 9th, the earl of Chatham's remains were honorably interred in Westminster Abbey at the public expence; at which also, a magnificent mo-

nument

ntiment has been ordered to be erected in the same place 1778, to his remembrance.

Warlike preparations are going forward in every part of Great Britain; but the French have undoubtedly the start, and are in the greater forwardness. Admiral Keppel sailed from St. Helen's on a cruise off Ushant, with 13 twenty ships of the line; but not in that excellent order, nor so well manned, as the critical situation of affairs between the two nations appears to require.

What could not be mentioned in the order of time, must now be related, that capt. Jones, of the Ranger privateer from Portsmouth in New Hampshire state, toward the end of April, landed in the night, at Whitehaven in Cumberland, a party of 30 men, and set fire to one of the ships in the harbour: by the exertion of the inhabitants the flames were extinguished before they had reached the rigging. He afterward landed some men on the western coast of Scotland, and plundered the house of lord Selkirk, near Kirkubright, of plate, jewels and other valuable articles. He is a Scotchman by birth, and is said to have lived formerly with his lordship.

You may expect from me the earliest intelligence of those important transactions, that are about to commence in this quarter of the world.

LETTER IV.

Rotterdam, Aug. 15, 1778.

FRIEND G.

1778. **T**HE French, to perplex the councils of the British court, assembled a multitude of regiments from all parts of the kingdom, and marched them down to the sea side, where they formed large encampments opposite to the shores of Great Britain. These manœuvres occasioned the calling out and embodying of the militia of England upon the rising of parliament. The militia being joined by the regular forces, camps were formed in different places: but the nation trusted most to the navy.

My last closed with the account of admiral Keppel's having sailed. He was deservedly in the highest esteem with his own profession, as well as the public. It was extremely proper therefore that he should be appointed to command that fleet, to which was committed the defence of the island, the protection of the homeward bound trade, and the preservation of the dignity of the British flag in the adjoining seas. On his arrival at Portsmouth toward the end of March, he found matters very different from the opinion that had been generally circulated, and from what he himself had been led to expect. Instead of a strong and well appointed fleet, he discovered to his astonishment, that there were only six sail of the line in any degree of condition for immediate

diate service; even these on his reviewing them, with a 1778. seaman's eye, gave him no peculiar pleasure. The paucity and condition of both men and ships was not more alarming, than the deficiency of all kinds of naval stores was lamentable; but the admiral acted with such prudence and caution, as to prevent that increase of the public alarm, that a display of these circumstances must have occasioned. He urged his private applications to the admiralty, with such assiduity and effect, that a new spirit and unusual degree of vigor were suddenly seen to pervade the naval department; and such industry was used, that beside dispatching the twelve ships for America under Byron, he was enabled to take the seas with a fleet of twenty sail of the line, at the time already mentioned. He had scarcely arrived at his station in the Bay of Biscay, when two French frigates, with two smaller vessels, appeared in sight, and were evidently taking a survey of the fleet. War had not been declared, nor reprisals ordered: but it was necessary to stop these frigates, as well to obtain intelligence, as to prevent its being conveyed. A general signal for chasing was made: a ship June of the line got at length along side of the *Licorne* of 17. 32 guns; on her firing a gun, the Frenchman stood to her and was brought into the fleet. Mean while, the other French frigate, *La Belle Poule*, of twenty-six heavy twelve pounders, beside several others of lighter metal, with a schooner of ten guns in company, were closely pursued by the *Arethusa* frigate of only twenty-eight six pounders, and the *Alert* cutter, till out of sight of the fleet. The *Arethusa* getting up with her chase, capt. Marshall requested the French officer, lieutenant *Chadeau de la Clocheterie*, to bring to, and acquainted him with

1778. the orders for conducting him to the admiral. A compliance being refused, the captain fired a shot across the Belle Poule, which she instantly returned, by pouring her whole broadside into the Arethusa. A desperate engagement ensued with unusual warmth and animosity for above two hours, each side vying with the utmost degree of national emulation to obtain the palm of victory, in this first action and opening of a new war. The Belle Poule had the superiority not only in weight of metal, but in number of men. The Arethusa was so shattered, that she became almost unmanageable, as there was little wind. The captain was obliged to act with the more caution, as he was upon the French coast, and close on shore at midnight. The Belle Poule having her head in with the land, and meeting with no further interruption from the Arethusa, embraced the opportunity of standing into a small bay. During the fore part of this action, the engagement was no less warm between the Alert cutter and French schooner. Their force was about equal. The contest was well supported for upward of an hour, when the schooner was compelled to strike. Next morning an unexpected movement made by the Licorne, occasioned one of the convoy to fire a shot across her way, as a signal for keeping her course, when to the astonishment of admiral Keppel and the whole fleet, she suddenly poured her whole broadside, accompanied with a general discharge of musketry, into the America of 74 guns, at the instant lord Longford her commander was standing upon the gunwale, and talking in terms of the utmost politeness to the French captain. The frigate instantly struck her colours, as soon as she had discharged her fire. Only four of the America's
people

people were wounded. Notwithstanding the provocation, lord Longford had such command of his temper as not to return a single shot. Another French frigate falling in with the fleet, was detained by the admiral under the plea of hostility committed by the *Licorne*; but several French merchantmen were suffered to pass through the fleet unmolested. The capture of the French frigates afforded the admiral a source of the most critical and alarming information. He was now within sight of Ushant, when he discovered to his astonishment, that the French fleet in Brest road and Brest water amounted to 32 ships of the line, beside 10 or 12 frigates, while his own force consisted only of 20 of the former, and three of the latter. The odds between the two fleets was so vast, that he could not justify risking an action, which might prove fatal to the kingdom. But it gave him the greatest uneasiness, to find himself obliged to turn his back on France. The French no sooner determined to take a decided part with the Americans, than they assiduously applied themselves to the getting of their navy into the utmost forwardness for actual service; and had proceeded with such profound secrecy, that the strength of it had not transpired so as to reach the British ministry, who appear to have been wanting in procuring good and early intelligence; which was a matter of so much importance in the estimation of the French, that they used every mean for obtaining it. The Brest fleet lay ready for sailing; and was only detained till the destination of admiral Byron's force could be ascertained at Paris.

On the return of the British fleet to Portsmouth, the admiral's conduct was branded with the most opprobrious terms, June 27.

1778 terms, and ascribed to the most disgraceful motives, and his general character treated with the most indecent scurrility, in those publications which he considered as under the immediate direction of the ministers. He bore all with wonderful temper; made no complaints; pressed forward the preparations for his return to sea, without noise or parade; and submitted to all the unmerited reproach thrown upon him, without being provoked to a justification, which, by the narration of the fact, must have criminated the first lord of the admiralty. The seasonable arrival of the two first of the British West India fleets, and of the Levant trade, brought in a supply of seamen, at the most critical period in which they could have been wanted. By this mean and the exertions every where used by the admiralty, Keppel was enabled to put again to sea, on the 9th of July, with 24 ships of the line, and was joined on the way by six more: he had also an addition of one frigate and two fire ships. Mean while the French king made use of the engagement with the *Belle Poule* and the taking of the other frigates, as the ostensible ground for issuing out orders for a reprisal on British ships, and the ordinance signed the 28th of March, was immediately published. Similar measures were pursued in Great Britain, when the account of these transactions was received. Thus nothing of war was wanting between the two nations excepting the formality of the declaration.

The force and destination of admiral Byron being at length made certain to the French ministry, orders were sent to the Brest fleet to proceed to sea. They instantly weighed anchor, and sailed the day preceding the departure of the British fleet from Portsmouth. They amounted

amounted to 32 ships of the line and a cloud of frigates, 1778. and were divided into three squadrons, the whole under the command of the count D'Orvilliers, who was assisted in his own particular division, by admiral the count de Guichen. The second was commanded by the count Duchaffault, assisted by Monsieur de Rochechouart, and the third by the duke of Chartres, a prince of the blood, seconded by admiral the count de Grasse. The duke was sent on board by the court to animate the fleet, and to intimate the greatness of the objects proposed, and how much reliance was placed on the courage and exertions of the officers and seamen. The British fleet was also thrown into three divisions, the van being commanded by Sir Robert Harland, and the rear by Sir Hugh Palliser. The commander in chief, with the centre division, was assisted by the voluntary services of admiral Campbell, a brave and experienced officer, who from ancient friendship and a long participation of danger and service, condescended to act as first captain in Keppel's own ship the Victory. The two fleets came in sight of each other on the 23d in the afternoon. From 23. the movements of the French admiral, it was inferred that he had no knowledge of the increase of Keppel's strength: but considered his fleet as being in number the same as when on its station before Brest. He appeared disposed to bring on an immediate action: but when the fleets approached so near, as to discover each other's force, he apparently relinquished that determination, and continued afterward to evade, with great caution and knowledge in his profession, all those endeavours which were used on the other side to bring on an engagement. Through a fresh gale and a change of wind in

1778. in the night, the French gained the weather gage, by which they had the advantage, either of bringing it on or of totally avoiding it. But two of their line of battle ships fell considerably to the leeward, and were so effectually cut off from the rest of the fleet, that they were never able to rejoin it during the remainder of the cruise. This put the hostile fleets on an equality in point of number, with respect to line of battle ships. The British fleet continued constantly to beat up against the wind in pursuit of the French, who declined coming to a general engagement, as they daily expected a strong reinforcement, and hoped to intercept the commercial fleets, that, while making for the British ports, would have to pass through the track in which their numerous frigates were stationed. Admiral Keppel penetrated their motives, and labored to bring them to action; and as the preserving of a regular line of battle with any hope of it was evidently impracticable, the signal for chasing to windward was kept constantly flying. Some
July 27. sudden shifts of wind, together with an unexpected and unintentional effect produced by an evolution on the French side, being all improved by the most masterly efforts on the other, brought the two fleets so close that they could not part without an action. But the French endeavoured to evade its consequences as much as possible; and by suddenly putting about on the contrary tack, altered the course of the ships in each fleet, so that they could engage only as they passed, instead of lying side to side, and thereby making an effectual impression.

The French began, by firing at a great distance on the headmost of Sir Robert Harland's division as the ships

ships led up, but not a shot was returned till they were near the enemy. The example was followed, or a similar conduct pursued by the fleet in general, as fast as each ship could close up with the French; and notwithstanding their having been necessarily extended by the chace, they were all soon in battle. As the fleets passed each other very close on the opposite tacks, the cannonade was heavy, and the effect considerable. The action lasted about three hours. As the French in their usual way, directed their fire principally against the rigging, several of the British ships suffered considerably in their masts, yards and sails. The British fire, which was principally levelled at the hulls of the enemy, was not deficient in its effect of another kind, the destruction of the seamen. The action being over for the present, admiral Keppel hauled down the signal for battle, till the ships could recover their stations, or get near enough to support each other on the renewal of the action. To call them together for that purpose, he immediately made the signal to form the line of battle a-head, which was considered as commanding the most prompt obedience. Admiral Palliser was at this moment in his proper station; but quitted it, and passing Keppel to leeward on the contrary tack, while the latter was advancing to the enemy, never came into the line during the rest of the day. Palliser being totally out of the line, other ships far astern, and five disabled in their rigging, at a great distance to leeward, the British admiral, about three o'clock in the afternoon, could not collect above twelve ships to renew the engagement. The French observing the exposed situation of the British ships, which had fallen to leeward to repair their damages,

1778. damages, edged away with an evident intention of cutting them off from the rest of the fleet. Admiral Keppel instantly discerned their design and the danger of the ships, and suddenly wore and stood athwart the van of the enemy, in a diagonal line, for their protection. He also dispatched orders to Sir Robert Harland to form his division at a distance astern of the Victory, to cover the rear and keep the enemy in check, till Palliser should, in obedience to the signal, come with his division into his proper station. The protection of the disabled ships being accomplished, and the French continuing to form their line, ranging up to leeward parallel to the centre division, it became the admiral's immediate object to form his as speedily as possible, in order to bear down upon them and renew the battle. Seeing Palliser still to windward, he sent capt. Windsor of the Fox frigate, with express orders to him to bear down into his wake; and to tell him, that he only waited for him and his division to renew the attack. This order not producing the desired effect, the admiral threw out the signal for all ships to come into their stations; and again at seven o'clock, being wearied out with fruitless expectation, he made the signal for each particular ship of Palliser's division to come into her station in the line; but before they had complied with this signal, night put an end to all further operations. From a motive of delicacy, no signal was particularly thrown out to the Formidable, Sir Hugh Palliser's own ship.

The French could have renewed the action during every hour of the afternoon, with apparent advantages, which from the situation of affairs could not possibly have escaped their observation. Their conduct the fol-

lowing night indicated their indisposition to a renewal of it. Three of their best sailing vessels were stationed at proper distances with lights to divert the attention of the British fleet, and to induce a belief that their whole line still kept its position. During this deception the rest of the fleet withdrew in the most silent manner, without lights or other signals than the throwing up of some rockets; and made the best of their way to Brest, where they arrived the next evening. By day light the French fleet had got at such a distance, that the British admiral concluded, he had not the smallest prospect of coming up with them, and that neither a general nor partial pursuit could answer any beneficial purpose. He therefore left only a proper force to protect the homeward bound trade, and then made the best of his way to Plymouth, as being the nearest port, in order to put the fleet into a proper condition to return in quest of the enemy.

It was observed on the day of action with equal surprise and regret, and by some of the bravest and most experienced British officers, that the French worked and manœuvred their ships, with a degree of seamen-like address and dexterity, which they never before perceived. The event of the day, and the consequent escape of the French fleet were to admiral Keppel intolerably grievous. By his consummate skill, and the most incessant industry, he had gained after four days pursuit of the enemy, one of the fairest opportunities of doing the most signal service to his country, in the most critical exigency, and of raising his own name to the summit of naval renown. He hoped to have made the 27th of July, *et* a proud day to Great Britain. All these mighty advantages and glorious rewards were unaccountably

1778. countably ravished from him, when they appeared within his grasp. In Plymouth, the failure of a complete victory was attributed to Sir Hugh Palliser; whose non-compliance with the admiral's signals has been ascribed by many to the disabled condition of some of the ships in his division.

The admiral, with wonderful temper, and no less prudence, accommodated his conduct to the necessity of his situation, and made the public security and interests the only objects of his direction. He advanced no charge against Palliser. His public letter was short, general, and barren of information. It stated facts so far as it went, threw no blame upon any body, and commended the bravery of the officers in general, and of Sir Robert Harland and Sir Hugh Palliser in particular. But this approbation is to be applied only to the particular circumstances and immediate time of the action: the subsequent transactions of the afternoon, were in general thrown into the shade; and the causes that prevented a renewal of the engagement left in such obscurity, as has drawn no small share of censure upon Keppel himself.

The French fleet returned to Brest considerably damaged in their hulls; but glorying in an action, wherein they had engaged an equal number of British ships without the loss of a single vessel, as though they had gained a victory. It will be some time before they are fully repaired, through a scarcity of the necessary means.

The Americans have many friends in Holland, who will be ready to assist them when an opportunity offers; but not a la mode de Paris. They have not the same inducements with the French to venture on a war with Britain,

Britain, in favor of the independence of your United States. Dutch policy will keep them from it, that they may enjoy the sweets of a neutrality while others are fighting. They may supply you with a loan; but they will not draw the sword in your behalf. Nothing will bring them to this, unless Britain should add to their long catalogue of political errors, that of compelling them to it.

LETTER V.

Roxbury, Nov. 12, 1778.

Lieutenant colonel Ethan Allen was at length exchanged; and congress granted him a brevet commission of colonel, in reward of his fortitude and zeal in the cause of his country.

General Sullivan being sent to command at Providence, gen. Pigot who was at Newport, inferred that there was a design of attacking Rhode Island whenever an opportunity offered: the latter therefore concluded upon an expedition that might delay or frustrate the event. Lieut. col. Campbell, with about 500 British and Hessians, was sent off in the night of the 24th, passed up the river, and landed from the ships, tenders and boats, before day, between Warren and Poppasquash-point. At day light they marched in two bodies, one

1778. for Warren, and the other for the head of Kickemuet river, where they destroyed about seventy flat-bottomed boats, and set fire to one of the state galleys, which was extinguished without doing much injury. They burnt also a quantity of pitch, tar, plank, &c. They then fired the meeting-house at Warren, and seven dwelling-houses; and retreated toward Bristol, where their ships and boats had fallen down to receive them. In Bristol they burnt two and twenty houses, and through mistake the church instead of the meeting house. The destruction of houses and places of worship was afterward attributed chiefly to the licentiousness of the soldiers, who treated both friends and foes with cruelty, plundering houses and robbing women of their shoe-buckles, gold rings, and handkerchiefs. They carried off with them a state galley. A few days after, a party of 150 men were sent from Newport to burn the saw-mills and contiguous houses at Tiverton. They fired an old mill and old house nigh the place of landing; and then proceeded for the town to execute the business they were sent upon: but the bridge leading to it being defended by five and twenty men, they could not cross though they attempted it repeatedly. The advancing season will close these small excursions by bringing forward more capital operations: and for the counter-acting of which, the Americans must depend much upon supplies from France. This reminds me, that on the 28th, a French 50 gun ship with 350 men, a brig and a schooner, bringing arms and dry goods, arrived in James river Virginia, from Rochfort. Congress the next day, to commemorate the agreeable event which has taken place between France and the United States, resolved that a

May
28.

new continental frigate, built in the Massachusetts, and 1778. lately launched, should be called the *Alliance*. Within three weeks after, the command of her was bestowed upon capt. Peter Landais.

In the beginning of June, the Trident arrived in the Delaware with the earl of Carlisle, Mr. Eden and gov. Johnstone, three of the commissioners for restoring peace between Great Britain and America. On the 9th Sir June Henry Clinton informed gen. Washington of their being 9. at Philadelphia, and requested a passport for doctor Ferguson, their secretary, with a letter from them to congress. The general declined granting a passport, which was unanimously approved by congress. The refusal made it necessary to forward the letter, with the acts, a copy of their commission and other papers by the common intercourse. They were received by an express from Washington on the 13th, and the letter was read till some offensive language against his most christian majesty offered, on which the further reading of it was suspended till the 16th; when the reading of that and the other papers was finished. They were referred to a committee, who drew up a letter to be sent by the president in answer to the letter and papers from the commissioners, which was unanimously agreed to by the delegates on the 17th, and was as follows—"I have received the letter from your excellencies of the 9th instant, with the enclosures, and laid them before congress. Nothing but an earnest desire to spare the further effusion of human blood could have induced them to read a paper containing expressions so disrespectful to his most Christian majesty, the good and generally of these states, or to consider propositions, ~~for~~ ^{of} derogatory to

1778 the honor of an independent nation.—The acts of the British parliament, the commission from your sovereign, and your letter, suppose the people of these states to be subjects of the crown of Great Britain, and are founded on the idea of dependence, which is utterly inadmissible.—I am further directed to inform your excellencies, that congress are inclined to peace, notwithstanding the unjust claims from which this war originated, and the savage manner in which it hath been conducted. They will therefore be ready to enter upon the consideration of a treaty of peace and commerce, not inconsistent with treaties already subsisting, when the king of Great Britain shall demonstrate a sincere disposition for that purpose. The only solid proof of this disposition will be an explicit acknowledgment of the independence of these states, or the withdrawing his fleets and armies.—I have the honor to be, your excellencies most obedient and humble servant.” Before this letter could be received by the commissioners, a movement took place at Philadelphia, which must have completely frustrated all negotiation, had the same been even in a train answering to the wishes of the British agents; for it indicated an apprehension of great danger to the royal forces should they continue in the city.

Mr. Eden brought with him secret orders for the speedy evacuation of Philadelphia: they were so secret as not to be made known either to himself or gov. Johnstone. Whether the earl of Carlisle met with the like treatment is not yet ascertained. It has been publicly asserted, that the orders were dated exactly three weeks before the commissioners sailed from England, which carries the date back to the last of March. On their deli-

delivery, Sir Henry Clinton immediately applied him-^{1778.}
self to the putting of them into execution. By the 18th June
every thing being ready, the British army evacuated the^{18.}
city, at three o'clock in the morning. They proceeded
to Gloucester Point, three miles down the river, and
before ten the whole had passed in safety across the De-
laware into New Jersey. At ten they began their march
to Haddonfield, which they reached the same day.
Your curiosity may make you desirous of knowing in
what condition the British left Philadelphia. An American
son of liberty, who visited it the beginning of July, wrote
to his friend—"The whole north side of the city, be-
fore you enter, is a promiscuous scene of ruin. Upon
getting into the city, I was surprised to find it had suf-
fered so little. I question whether it would have fared
better, had our own troops been in possession of it, that
is, as to the buildings." The necessary preparations
for its evacuation could not be concealed from gen.
Washington; and when the appearance of their intend-
ing to march through Jersey became serious, he detach-
ed gen. Maxwell's brigade, in conjunction with the mi-
litia of that state, to impede the progress of the royal
troops, so as to give the American army time to come
up with them, and take advantage of any favorable cir-
cumstances that might offer. Some time before, gen.
Lee having been exchanged, had joined the army at
Valley Forge. The evening preceding the evacuation,
the principles of the operations proper to be adopted were
taken up and fully discussed by his excellency and the ge-
neral officers, when it appeared to be the common sen-
timent, that it would be highly criminal to hazard a
general action with the enemy at present, as by it they

1778. might lose every advantage which a three years war, combined with many fortunate circumstances, had given to America. The next day his excellency after observing, "near 11,000 men would be able to march off the ground in a condition for service," proposed in writing a set of queries to the several general officers, in order to learn the particular opinion of each, as to "what is to be done?" which was to be returned on paper. The answers were in common the same with the prevailing sentiment of the council on the preceding day. Gen. Mifflin was not of the number consulted. He would have gloried in being present to have taken an active part upon this occasion; but by some secret manœuvres was thrown at a distance. He desired and obtained leave of congress, on the 14th of May, to join the army, and repaired to Valley Forge. Some of the general officers were disgusted at the thought of his returning to his command, now the campaign was opening, to share in the honors it might yield, when he had not shared with them in the peculiar distresses of their winter quarters. When their sentiments came to be known to certain members of congress, measures were taken to produce and perfect the following motion on June the 11th, "That gen. Washington be directed to order an inquiry to be made into the conduct of major gen. Mifflin, late quarter-master general, and the other officers who acted under him in that department; and if it shall appear that the extraordinary deficiencies thereof, and the consequent distresses of the army, were chargeable to the misconduct of the quarter-master general, or any of the said officers, that a court martial be held on the delinquents." When this inquiry was ordered to be made, he was with the
army,

army, and in a fair way of obtaining a just proportion ^{1778.} of his countrymen's confidence. He clearly saw the meaning of the stroke: but the order made it necessary for him to obtain leave of absence for some weeks, to collect materials for his justification.

When intelligence of Sir Henry Clinton's having evacuated Philadelphia and marched to Haddonfield, reached the American head quarters, the next measure to be taken by gen. Washington was apparent. Gen. Greene, by his conduct and industry, as quarter-master general, had effected such a happy change in the line of his department, as enabled his excellency with great facility to move with the whole army and baggage from Valley Forge in pursuit of the enemy. The troops proceeded to, and crossed the Delaware at Corriel's ferry; when a select corps of 600 men were immediately detached under col. Morgan to reinforce gen. Maxwell. The slow advance of Sir Henry led his excellency to suspect, that he had a design of bringing on a general action, could he draw the Americans into the lower country. This consideration, and a desire of refreshing the troops after the fatigues they had endured from rainy and excessive hot weather, determined the American general to halt about five miles from Princeton. While there he stated ^{June 24.} to the general officers the following facts—"The enemy's force is between 9 and 10,000 rank and file—the American army on the ground is 10,684 rank and file, beside the advanced brigade under gen. Maxwell of about 1200, and about 1200 militia"—on which he proposed the question, "Will it be advisable to hazard a general action?" The answer was—"Not advisable, but a detachment of 1500 to be immediately sent to act as

1778. occasion may serve, on the enemy's left flank and rear, in conjunction with the other continental troops and militia already hanging about them, and the main body to preserve a relative position, to act as circumstances may require—Lee, Stirling, Greene, Fayette, Steuben, Poor, Paterfon, Woodford, Scott, Portail, Knox." The detachment was immediately made under gen. Scott. The same day Sir Henry concluding that gen. Washington, who had alway hitherto avoided a general action, would not now give into it against every dictate of policy, and that the American views were directed against his baggage, in which part he was indeed vulnerable, determined to take the right hand road leading to Sandy Hook, instead of making for the Rariton, where he suspected gen. Gates with the northern army might join that under gen. Washington. Gates arrived at Fishkill about the middle of May to take the command in that quarter. The troops under him were so few, that he could not answer for the defence of the pass through the highlands with which he was intrusted; and was persuaded, that if the enemy made a sudden and determined push to carry it, the militia would not come in time to save it. On the 17th of June draughts arrived, and militia were hourly expected; after mentioning this in a letter to congress, he exclaims—"Thank heaven for the precious time the enemy have so foolishly lost!" He had no idea of marching for the Rariton: but his cavalry, and a considerable body of infantry, was at this period so posted, as to give the alarm of an attack upon New York: and he proposed moving the main body of his army to White Plains, and taking a strong camp in that neighbourhood, to keep up the alarm; which

was

was highly approved of by gen. Washington, and procured his thanks. On the 25th his excellency moved his army to Kingston. Upon receiving intelligence that Sir Henry was prosecuting his route toward Monmouth court-house, he dispatched 1000 select men under brigadier gen. Wayne, and sent the Marquis de la Fayette to take the command of the whole advanced corps, with orders to seize the first fair opportunity of attacking the enemy's rear. Gen. Lee declined the command, as he was against attacking, on which it was offered to the marquis, who accepted it with pleasure. In the evening of the same day, the whole army marched from Kingston, intending to preserve a proper distance for supporting the advanced corps, and arrived at Cranberry early the next morning. The intense heat of the weather, and a heavy storm coming on, made it impossible to resume the march that day without great injury to the troops. The advanced corps being in consequence hereof too remote from the main body, and too far upon the right to be supported, the marquis had orders sent him to file off by his left toward English-town, which he executed early in the morning of the 27th. Sir Henry being sensible of the approach of the American army, changed the disposition of his troops, and placed in the rear what were deemed the best, consisting of all the grenadiers, light infantry, and chasseurs of the line; at the same time gen. Knyphausen was requested to take the baggage of the whole army under the charge of his division, which made the first column. Under the head of baggage was comprised, not only all the wheel carriages of every department, but also the bat-horses—a train which, as the country admitted but of one route

1778. for carriages, extended near twelve miles. The alteration made by Sir Henry laid gen. Washington under the necessity of increasing the number of the advanced corps. His excellency embraced this opportunity of gratifying gen. Lee, with the consent of the marquis. Lee observing that his having declined the command of the advanced corps had lessened him in the opinion of officers and soldiers, wished to be appointed afresh. Washington would not consent to remove the marquis; but a reinforcement being wanted, he detached Lee with two brigades, to join the marquis at English-town, and of course to take upon him the command of the whole. The main body marched the same day, and encamped within three miles of that place. Morgan's corps was left hovering on Sir Henry's right flank, and the Jersey militia, amounting to about 700, under gen. Dickinson, on his left. The royal army was strongly encamped in the neighbourhood of Monmouth court-house, where they halted till the morning of the 28th. When once arrived at the heights of Middle-town, about twelve miles in advance, there would have been no possibility of attempting any thing against them with a prospect of success, the American general therefore determined to attack their rear the moment they moved from their present ground, and communicated his intention to Lee, who was ordered to make the necessary disposition, and to keep his troops in readiness for the shortest notice. The like was done with respect to the troops under his own immediate command.

June 28. General Knyphausen moved at day break: Sir Henry that he might not press upon him, did not follow till near eight o'clock, with the other division, composed of the

the 3d, 4th, and 5th brigades of British, two battalions of British grenadiers, the Hessian grenadiers, a battalion of light infantry, the guards, and the 16th regiment of light dragoons, a body of troops not easily to be equalled.

About one o'clock in the morning, gen. Lee received a letter from gen. Washington, and in pursuance of the directions it contained, wrote to gen. Dickinson to select some hundreds of his best men, and detach them as nigh to the British rear as he could. These troops were to act as a corps of observation, and to forward the earliest intelligence respecting the enemy. He also ordered col. Morgan to advance with the men under his command so near as to attack them on their first movement: but it was left to him how to act, only he was to take care and not expose his troops, in that manner as to disable him from acting in conjunction with Lee should there be a necessity for it. Orders were likewise sent to Grayson, as the commanding officer of the two brigades (of Scott and Varnum,) consisting of about 600 men, to get them instantly in readiness to march. By day light they entered English-town; but it was not till between five and six that they marched from thence toward Monmouth court-house, having been detained for want of guides. Nearly at the same time, Lee gave orders to the several detachments and Maxwell's brigade, to prepare for marching immediately, leaving their packs behind under proper guard: they followed the two just mentioned brigades about seven o'clock. About five Dickinson sent an express to gen. Washington, informing that the front of the enemy had began their march. His excellency instantly put the army in motion, and sent orders to Lee to move on and attack them, unless there

1778. there should be *very powerful reasons to the contrary**; and acquainted him, that he was marching to support him, and for doing it with the greater expedition and convenience, should make the men disencumber themselves of their packs and blankets. The exceptive clause in the orders rendered them discretionary: they manifested the earnest desire of the commander in chief, that an important blow might be struck which the enemy should feel; but Lee could not consider them as requiring him to risk a general engagement, in direct repugnancy to the spirit of those councils of war that had been repeatedly held upon the subject. While Lee was advancing with his column, he sent forward an aid to order Grayson to push on as fast as possible and attack the enemy. Before the aid overtook him, he had passed Freehold meeting-house with the two brigades. The aid delivered Lee's orders; but gave it as his opinion, that Grayson had better not move on, for that he had been informed, that the main body of the enemy was near Monmouth court-house, and was thought to be marching to attack them, of which circumstance he supposed Lee was ignorant. The aid on his return fell in with Dickinson, who gave him the same information, and charged him with a message to Lee. Lee conformed to it on its delivery, and gave orders for posting two militia regiments upon a hill for the securing of a particular road, and then pushed forward over a morass or ravine, by the bridge or causeway, to a height where Dickinson was with a few militia. During his stay on this height, intelligence of the most contradictory nature was continually brought him. Some asserted, that the

* General Washington's letter of July 1, 1778, to congress,

enemy had moved off with precipitation, and that it 1778. was only a covering party which remained; others averred, that the main force was still on the ground, and filing off in columns to the right and left—one while the enemy's troops were turning the flanks of the Americans—at another, pushing in front. These opposite reports occasioned Varnum's brigade and part of Scott's, and col. Durgee's brigade of Lee's column, to pass and repass the bridge over the morass several times, as it was universally agreed to be by no means warrantable to risk an action, with a ravine in the rear, over which there was only one good passage. While these marchings and counter-marchings took place, the marquis de la Fayette arrived at the head of the main body of Lee's troops; when the general, having reconnoitred a wood, into which it had been reported a battalion or two of the enemy had thrown themselves, and being satisfied that it was groundless, determined to march on, and ascertain with his own eyes, the number, order and disposition of the enemy, and then to conduct himself accordingly. His whole command amounted to about 4000 men, exclusive of Morgan's corps and the Jersey militia; and consisted of gen. Scott's detachment, gen. Wayne's, gen. Maxwell's brigade, gen. Varnum's, gen. Scott's, and col. Jackson's regiment. When they had nearly passed through the woods, with which the country abounds, and were arrived at a point facing the Court-house, and on the edge of a plain about three miles in length and one in breadth, they were formed, but within the skirt of the wood, that the enemy might not discover them. Here they remained while gens. Lee and Wayne, and a few others, went out upon the right.

1778. right and rode forward to reconnoitre. From the observations Lee made, and the intelligence he obtained, he concluded that the forces he saw were no other than the enemy's covering party, and entertained hopes of an interval between them and the main body, sufficient to afford him the opportunity of cutting them off. That he might perfect this business, Wayne was appointed to command 700 men, to whom were attached two pieces of artillery. Wayne was to attack the covering party in the rear, faintly so as to halt them, but not with vigor lest that should occasion their retreating with celerity to the main body, or drawing from it so powerful a reinforcement as to defeat the principal design. Mean time Lee was to endeavour, by a short road leading to the left, to gain the front of the party. While marching on this road, one of gen. Washington's suite came up to procure intelligence. Lee with a fixed firm tone of voice and countenance which suggested confidence of success, desired him to inform his excellency, that the enemy did not appear well to understand the roads; that the route he was on cut off two miles; that the rear of the enemy was composed of 1500 or 2000; that he expected to fall in with them, and had great certainty of cutting them off; and that gen. Wayne and col. Butler were amusing them with a few loose shot while he was performing the route. Wayne's command was advanced to the right and drawn up. The enemy appeared just in the edge of a wood upon an eminence with their light dragoons. A few of the American light horsemen were advanced upon the right, at a very considerable distance. One of Lee's aids de camp observed the queen's light dragoons parading as though they meant to charge these

these American light-horsemen, who had no officer of eminence to head them; he therefore rode up to and advised them to let the British dragoons come as near as could be done with safety, and then to retreat off to where gen. Wayne was, and let him receive them. The British horse pursued till they came near the general, when receiving a fire from col. Butler's regiment posted on the skirt of a wood, they wheeled and galloped off in great haste to their own body: as they were retiring, the two pieces of artillery fired a few shot at them. Wayne then advanced, and encouraged his men to follow on, and charge the enemy with bayonets. The aid rode back to Lee, who immediately sent him forward to Wayne, with orders that he should only feign an attack, and not push on too precipitately, as that would subvert his plan, and disappoint his intentions. Lieut. col. Oswald, who commanded the artillery, supposed that the enemy were retreating, and so passed the morass in front over a causeway into a grain field, and began to cannonade. This happened after ten o'clock. About the same time a part of Lee's troops issued out of a wood, on the left of and about a mile below the Court-house, in small columns, and in an oblique direction with respect to the royal forces, rather toward their right and within cannon shot. These were drawn up ready to face the Americans, with their right near a wood; and their left on open ground covered by their cavalry and forming an obtuse angle with the Court-house. The cavalry filed off to the left, as if with design to attempt something on the right of Lee's troops, which occasioned an order to the marquis de la Fayette to wheel his column by his right, and to gain and attack the enemy's left flank.

Lee

1778. Lee having also ordered to the right the three regiments in Wayne's detachment, Wesson's, Stewart's and Livingston's, rode toward Oswald's artillery and reconnoitred the enemy, who appeared in full view marching back again toward the Court-house, and in greater numbers than was expected, so that Lee said, he believed he was mistaken in their strength.

Let us now advert to the manoeuvres of Sir Henry Clinton. Soon after he had begun with his column to follow gen. Knyphausen, reconnoitring parties of the Jersey militia appeared on his left flank. The queen's rangers fell in with, and dispersed some detachments among the woods in the same quarter. His rear guard having descended from the heights above Freehold into the plain, some American columns appeared likewise descending into it, and began the cannonade on his rear, which was returned by a superior fire. At this instant, intelligence was brought to Sir Henry, that the enemy were discovered marching in force on both his flanks. He conjectured, that the object of the Americans was the baggage, which at that juncture was engaged in defiles that continued for miles. He conceived that the only means of parrying the apprehended blow was by facing about, attacking the corps which harassed his rear, and pressing it so hard, as to oblige the detachments to return from his flanks to its assistance. Thinking that the measure might possibly draw on a general action, he sent for a brigade of British, and the 17th light dragoons from Knyphausen's division, and at the same time gave directions, that on their arrival they should take a position for covering his right flank. He then made a disposition

disposition and advanced in a direction toward the right 1778. of the Americans.

This happened while Lee was reconnoitring. The American column to the left of him under gen. Scott, quitted the wood, crossed a morass, and formed in the plain field about a hundred yards in front of Maxwell, who expected an opportunity to form his brigade, by Scott's moving to the right as there was a vacancy between the latter and the troops with Lee. These were at that moment moving to the right, and every step they gained came nearer to the royal forces, who were also pushing to the right of the Americans. Lee's discernment led him immediately to send off one of his aids, with orders to Scott, whom he supposed to be in the wood on the other side of the morass, to halt his column in the wood, and continue there till further orders: that there might be no possible misconception, another aid was speedily dispatched with similar orders. Before these could be delivered, Scott had mistaken the movements on his right for a retreat; and apprehended danger to his own column in case of its remaining where he was, notwithstanding his detachment, and Maxwell's brigade with the other troops to the left made full two-thirds of Lee's whole command, and though the enemy appeared to bend their course from the left to the right of the Americans. Under such apprehension, Scott recrossed the morass, re-entered the wood, and retreated: Maxwell and the others did the like of course. When the first aid reached that part of the wood to which he had been directed, and found that Scott had marched off the ground, he rode back: while returning, he met the second aid, and acquainted him with what had taken place:

1778. place: upon their coming to Lee, and communicating their information, the general discovered much surprise, and expressed his disapprobation of Scott's conduct in strong terms; but immediately upon the intelligence, directed a light horse officer to carry orders to the marquis de la Fayette to retreat to the Court-house. A general retreat now commenced on the right, till the troops reached Freehold and a neighbouring wood. When these were quitted, the British pursued as far as the village, where they halted. Mean while the Americans marched on and passed the next morass in front of Carr's house, about half a mile from the village. The retreats and advances which took place were attended with cannonadings on each side. The halt of the British, on account of the intense heat of the weather, and their having suffered severely from fatigue, admitted of the Americans halting also for a considerable space, which heat and fatigue had rendered equally necessary for them. But upon the advance of the British from Freehold, and Lee's discerning that the position he at first meant to occupy with the design of receiving the enemy and baffling their attack, was not suitable; the whole of of his command, Scott, Maxwell, and the others having now joined the corps which before formed the right, were ordered to retreat from the neighbourhood of Carr's house toward a wood and eminence behind the morass they had crossed in the morning, which had been pointed out to him as a desirable and proper spot. Before they had wholly left the ground about Carr's house, the British cavalry made a sudden and rapid charge upon some parties of the American horse, who were in the rear reconnoitring. It was expected they would have attempted a charge

a charge on the whole rear, but they did not venture upon it.

Soon after Lee with his columns issued out of the woods below the Court-house into the plain, gen. Washington was advancing with the main body of the army between English-town and Freehold meeting. Expecting from the information brought him, that the van of Lee's command and the rear of the British would ere long engage, he ordered the right wing under gen. Greene to go to the right to prevent the enemy's turning his right flank; and then prepared to follow with the left wing directly in Lee's rear to support him. While this disposition was making, he learned, to his great surprise, from a countryman, that the continental troops were retreating. Though the account was confirmed by two or three persons whom he met on the road, after moving a few paces forward, yet he appeared to discredit it, having not heard any firing except a few cannon a considerable time before. He rode on, and between Freehold meeting and the morass, which he had just crossed, met the retreating troops marching toward the same, as Lee meant that they should re-pass it, and then occupy the ground behind it, where he proposed making a stand against the enemy. Washington was exceedingly alarmed at finding the advanced corps falling back upon the main body, without the least notice given him. He desired one of the retreating colonels to march his men over the morass, halt them on the eminence, and refresh them. Seeing Lee at the head of the next column, he rode up to him with a degree of astonishment and indignation, and proposed certain questions that implied censure. Lee felt it, and an-

1778. swered with warmth and unsuitable language. Hard and irritating words passed between them for a short space, when Washington rode on toward the rear of the retreating troops. He had not gone many yards before he met his secretary, who told him that the British army were within fifteen minutes march of that place, which was the first intelligence he received of their pushing on so briskly. He remained there till the extreme rear of the retreating troops got up, when looking about, and judging the ground to be an advantageous spot for giving the enemy the first check, he ordered col. Stewart's and lieut. col. Ramsay's battalions to form, and incline to their left, that they might be under cover of a corner of woods, and not be exposed to the enemy's cannon in front. Lee having been told by one of his aids, that Washington had taken the command, answered, "Then I have nothing further to do," turned his horse, and rode after his excellency in front. Washington on his coming up asked, "Will you command on this ground or not? If you will, I will return to the main body, and have them formed upon the next height." Lee replied, "It is equal with me where I command." Washington then told him, "I expect you will take proper measures for checking the enemy." Lee said, "Your orders shall be obeyed, and I will not be the first to leave the field." Washington then rode to the main army, which was formed with the utmost expedition on the eminence with the morass in front. Immediately upon his riding off, a warm cannonade commenced between the British and the American artillery on the right of Stewart and Ramsay; between whom and the advanced troops of the British army a heavy fire began soon after

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in the skirt of the woods before mentioned. The British 1778. pressed on close, their light horse charged upon the right of the Americans, and the latter were obliged to give way in such haste, that the British horse and infantry came out of the wood seemingly mixed with them. The action then commenced between the British and col. Livingston's regiment, together with Varnum's brigade, which had been drawn up by Lee's order, and lined the fence that stretched across the open field in front of the bridge over the morass, with the view of covering the retreat of the artillery, and the troops advanced with them. The artillery had timely retired to the rear of the fence, and from an eminence discharged several grapes of shot at the British, engaged with Livingston's and Varnum's troops; these were soon broken by a charge of the former and retired. The artillery were then ordered off. Prior to the commencement of the last action, Lee sent orders to col. Ogden, who had drawn up in the wood nearest the bridge, to defend that post to the last extremity, thereby to cover the retreat of the whole over the bridge. Lee was one of the last that remained on the field, and brought off the rear of the retreating troops. Upon his addressing gen. Washington after passing the morass with—"Sir, here are my troops, how is it your pleasure that I should dispose of them?"—he was ordered to arrange them in the rear of Englishtown.

The check the British received, gave time to make a disposition of the left wing and second line of the main army in the wood, and on the eminence to which Lee had been directed and was retreating. On this were placed some batteries of cannon by lord Stirling, who

1778. commanded the left wing, which played upon the British with great effect, and seconded by parties of infantry, detached to oppose them, effectually put a stop to their advance. Gen. Greene, who had early filed off to the right, on intelligence of the retreat of the advanced corps, marched up, and took a very advantageous position on the right of Stirling. The British finding themselves warmly opposed in front, attempted to turn the American left flank, but were repulsed. They also made a movement to the American right with as little success, Greene having advanced a body of troops with artillery to a commanding piece of ground, which not only disappointed their design, but severely enfiladed those in the front of the left wing. In addition to this, Wayne advanced with a body of troops, and kept up so severe and well directed a fire, that the British were soon compelled to give way. They retired and took the position about Carr's house, which Lee had before occupied. Here their flanks were secured by thick woods and morasses, while their front could be approached only through a narrow pass. Washington however resolved to attack them; and for that purpose ordered gen. Poor with his own and the Carolina brigade, to move round upon their right; and gen. Woodford to their left; and the artillery to gall them in front: but they were prevented getting within reach before dark. They remained upon the ground, which they had been directed to occupy, during the night, with an intention to begin the attack early the next morning; and the main body continued lying upon their arms in the field of action, to be in readiness for supporting them. During the action, Washington animated his forces by
his

his gallant example; and by exposing his person to every danger common to the meanest soldier, taught them to hold nothing too dear for the good of their country. At night he laid down, and reposed himself in his cloak under a tree, in hope, as may be supposed, of a general action the ensuing day; for it appears from several circumstances, that he was all along rather desirous of that event, notwithstanding the prevailing contrary opinion of the general officers whom he consulted. In the mean time Sir Henry Clinton's troops were employed in removing their wounded; and about twelve o'clock * at night they marched away in such silence, that though Poor lay extremely near them, their retreat was effected without his knowledge. They left behind them four officers and about forty privates, whose wounds were too dangerous to permit their removal.

The extreme heat of the weather, the distance Sir Henry had gained by marching in the night, and the fatigue of the Americans, made a pursuit on the part of gen. Washington impracticable and fruitless. It would only have been

* In the London Gazette extraordinary, Aug. 24, 1778, Sir Henry Clinton is represented as writing in his official letter—"Having reposed the troops till ten at night, to avoid the excessive heat of the day, I took advantage of the *moon-light* to rejoin lieut. gen. Knyphausen." Poor Will's Almanack, printed at Philadelphia for Joseph Cruikshank, tells the public, that the new moon was on June 24th, at ten in the morning, and that on the 28th of June it set 59 minutes after ten at night. Sir Henry could have had little advantage from the light of a moon but four days old, and that was to set in an hour's time, had he marched off his troops precisely at ten; but if at about twelve, as gen. Washington writes, and which is most likely to have been the case, the moon-light below the horizon could not have been of any advantage.

1778. fatal to numbers of the men, several of whom died on the day of action through the excessive heat; for Fahrenheit's thermometer was at 96 degrees in the Jerseys, and is said to have been 112 at Philadelphia. It was a deep sandy country through which they marched, almost destitute of water; but had there been a plenty, many more would probably have perished by unguarded drinking to allay their thirst; some were lost in that way. Sir Henry, without having been joined by the brigade of British and the 17th light dragoons from Knyphausen's division, secured by his manœuvres the arrival of the royal army in the neighbourhood of Sandy Hook on the 30th of June, without the loss of either the covering party or the baggage: but not without a considerable diminution of troops; for by a moderate calculation, from the evacuation of Philadelphia down to that day, about eight hundred deserted, a great number of whom were Hessians. By the returns of the officers who had the charge of the burying parties, they left 245 non-commissioned and privates on the field and 4 officers. There were also beside these, several fresh graves and burying holes found near the field, in which they had put their dead before they quitted it*. Fifty-nine of their soldiers perished without receiving a wound, in the same manner as several of the Americans, merely through fatigue and heat. The loss of lieutenant-col. Monckton, who was slain, was much lamented by the British. Upward of a hundred were made prisoners, including the officers and privates left upon the field. On the part of the Americans, lieutenant-col. Bonner and major Dickinson, officers of distinguished merit, were slain; beside six

* General Washington's letters.

others of inferior rank, and 61 non-commissioned and 177² privates. The wounded were 24 officers and 136 non-commissioned and privates. The missing amounted to 130, but many of them, having only dropped through fatigue, soon joined the army. Gen. Washington commended the zeal and bravery of the officers in general, but particularized Wayne as deserving special commendation. The behaviour of the troops in general, after recovering from the first surprise occasioned by the retreat of the advanced corps, was mentioned as what could not be surpassed. The public acknowledgments of congress were very flattering to the army, and particularly so to the general and his officers. The general having declined all further pursuit, detached only some light troops to attend the motions of the royal forces, and drew off the main body of his army to the borders of the North river.

The general, on his second interview with Lee upon the day of action, intimated by his re-instating and leaving him in the command of the advanced corps, that he meant to pass by what had happened, without further notice: but the latter could not brook the expressions used by the former at their first meeting, and therefore wrote him two passionate letters, which occasioned his being put under an arrest, and brought to trial four days after the action, on the following charges exhibited against him by his excellency—1st, For disobedience of orders, in not attacking the enemy on the 28th of June, agreeable to repeated instructions:—2dly, For misbehaviour before the enemy on the same day, by making an *unnecessary, disorderly and shameful retreat*:—3dly, For disrespect to the commander in chief,

1778 chief, in two letters dated the 1st of July and the 28th of June. The letter dated the 1st of July, was so dated through mistake, being written on the 28th of June. On the 12th of August, the court martial, at which lord Stirling presided, found him guilty upon every charge, and sentenced him to be suspended from any command in the armies of the United States of North America, for the term of twelve months. The terms of the second charge were softened down, as he was only found guilty of misbehaviour before the enemy by making an unnecessary, and in some few instances, a disorderly retreat. Many were displeased with the conduct of the court martial, and thought he ought not to have been found guilty, except upon the last charge. They argued—"It appears from Washington's own letter and other circumstances, that it was submitted to Lee's judgment whether to attack, in what manner and when. There was manifest proof of Lee's intending to attack in hope of cutting off the enemy's covering party: but he altered his opinion as to the promising prospect he had of doing it, on his coming into the plain, reconnoitring the enemy, and concluding that they were more numerous than before supposed: and upon finding Scott had quitted the point of wood where he meant to order him to remain, he judged an immediate retreat necessary." The detachment with which Lee was, amounted to no more than one third of his whole command, Scott's column, Maxwell's brigade and the other troops to his left being full two thirds. When he began to retire, the main body was more than six miles distant, though advancing. The enemy's force was rendered the more formidable by their great superiority in cavalry, which was

was thought to be between four and five hundred. The ¹⁷⁷⁸ ground being open was by no means advantageous to the Americans, as the British cavalry could have turned their flank. Would then an immediate attack under these circumstances, though it might have distressed the enemy's rear at the first onset, have been advisable, as it might probably have involved a general action before the detachment could have received support? Did not prudence dictate falling back and taking a new position, rather than hazarding an action in the plain? If Lee's judgment determined for the affirmative, how could he be declared guilty of disobeying orders? The circumstances already noted are in favor of the retreat's being necessary in the first instance: and when commenced, the prosecution of it was absolutely necessary till a good position could be taken for making an effectual stand against the enemy, to which position Lee was marching when met by Washington. The strenuous efforts of the British after the main army was drawn up in that position, before they retired three miles from the scene of action, tend also to justify the commencement of the retreat. No mention should have been made of its being in a few instances disorderly, unless such instances were really chargeable to Lee's misconduct; whereas of these few it is certain, that some were owing to fatigue and the enormous heat of the weather. The very sentence of the court martial is in favor of Lee's innocence as to the two first charges, for a year's suspension from command is in no wise proportioned to his crimes if guilty."—Several are of opinion he would not have been condemned on these two, had it not been for his disrespectful conduct toward Washington. On the other hand,

1778. hand, some have surmised, that his manœuvres were owing either to treachery or want of courage; but they who have the opportunity of knowing him most, will be furthest from such apprehensions*.

No sooner had Sir Henry Clinton with the army evacuated Philadelphia, than lord Howe prepared to sail with the fleet for New York. Repeated calms retarded his passage down the Delaware, so that he could not quit the river till the evening of June the 28th; however he anchored off Sandy Hook the next day, followed by the transports. The succeeding day Sir Henry arrived, and the artillery, baggage, and part of the troops were removed from the main, as the weather permitted; the rest of the army passed, on the 5th of July, over a bridge of boats across a narrow channel to Sandy Hook. They were afterward carried up to New York. On the 7th, lord Howe received advice that the Toulon squadron was arrived on the coast of Virginia. Count d'Estaing anchored at night on the 8th at the entrance of the Delaware, after being 87 days at sea. On that day the count wrote to congress: on the receipt of his letter, they sent word to gen. Washington, that it was their desire he would co-operate with the count, in the execution of such offensive operations as they should mutually approve. The same day the congress resolved, that a suitable house should be provided for Monsieur Gerard, and chose a committee of five to wait on him upon his arrival, and conduct him to his lodgings. The

July
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* In compiling several of the preceding pages, recourse has been had to the public letters of Sir Henry Clinton and gen. Washington, to various private letters and information, and to gen. Lee's trial.

next morning d'Estaing weighed and sailed toward the Hook, and in the evening of the 11th anchored with-
out it. Had not bad weather and unexpected impediments prevented, the count must have surprised Howe's fleet in the Delaware, as the latter would not have had time to escape after being apprized of his danger. The destruction of the fleet must have been the consequence of such surprisal; and that must have occasioned the inevitable loss of the royal army, which would have been so enclosed by the French Squadron on the one side, and the American forces on the other, that the Saratoga catastrophe must have been repeated. This fatal stroke would have been of an amount and magnitude (with respect to both the marine and land service, and the consequences hanging upon it) not easily to be conceived. The prevention of it, by the various hindrances that d'Estaing met with on his voyage, ought to be considered by Great Britain as a signally providential deliverance.

Lord Howe's fleet consisted only of six 64 gun ships, three of 50, and two of 40, with some frigates and sloops. Count d'Estaing had twelve ships of the line; several of which were of great force and weight of metal, one carrying 90, another 80, and six 74 guns each; he had beside present with him, three of the four large stout frigates, that had attended him on his voyage. He anchored on the Jersey side, about four miles without the Hook; and American pilots of the first abilities, provided for the purpose, went on board the fleet: among them were persons whose circumstances placed them above the rank of common pilots. Lord Howe had the advantage of possessing the harbour formed
by

1778. by Sandy Hook; the entrance of which is covered by a bar, and from whence the inlet passes to New York. As it could not be known whether the French would not attempt passing in force over the bar, it was necessary that the British should be prepared to oppose them. On this occasion, a spirit displayed itself not only in the fleet and army, but through every order and denomination of seamen, that is not often equalled. The crews of the transports hastened with eagerness to the fleet, that it might be completely manned: masters and mates solicited employment, and took their stations at the guns with the common sailors: the light infantry, grenadiers, and even wounded officers so contended to serve as marines on board the men of war, that the point of honor was obliged to be decided by lot. In a word, the patriotism, zeal, bravery and magnanimity which appeared at this juncture, was a credit even to Great Britain. It must however be acknowledged, that the popularity of lord Howe, and the confidence founded on his abilities, contributed not a little to these exertions. But the American pilots declaring it impossible to carry the large ships of d'Estaing's squadron over the bar into the Hook, on account of their draught of water, and gen. Washington pressing him to sail to Newport, he left the Hook after eleven days tarriance, and in a few hours was out of sight. Nothing could be more providential. While he remained, about twenty sail of vessels bound to New York fell into his possession; they were chiefly prizes taken from the Americans: but had he stayed a few days longer, admiral Byron's fleet must have fallen a defenceless prey into his hands. That squadron had met with unusual bad weather; and being

separated

July
22.

separated in different storms, and lingering through a tedious passage, arrived, scattered, broken, sickly, dismasted, or otherwise damaged, in various degrees of distress, upon different and remote parts of the American coast. Between the departure of d'Estaing and the 30th of July, the Renown of 50 guns from the West Indies, the Raisable and Centurion of 64 and 50 from Halifax, and the Cornwall of 74 guns, all arrived singly at Sandy Hook. By his speedy departure a number of provision ships from Cork escaped also, together with their convoy. They went up the Delaware within fifty miles of Philadelphia after lord Howe had quitted the river, not having obtained any information of what had happened. The British ministry had neglected countermanding their destination, though orders for the evacuation of Philadelphia had been sent off so early, as to have admitted of their receiving fresh directions where to have steered before sailing. Great rejoicings were made at New York upon their safe arrival, especially as provisions were much wanted by both the fleet and army.

As the bar prevented all attempts on the part of d'Estaing against Howe's fleet within the Hook, a plan was concerted for attacking Rhode Island; and gen. Sullivan, who commanded at Providence, was employed in assembling an additional body of New England militia. Such was the eagerness of people to co-operate with their new allies, and their confidence of succeeding and reaping laurels, that some thousands of volunteers, gentlemen and others from Boston, Salem, Newbury Port, Portsmouth, &c. engaged in the service. When d'Estaing was arrived off point Judith on the 29th, the pilots

1778. pilots who were to have facilitated his entrance into Newport, were wanting, which occasioned a delay. But on Aug. the morning of August the 5th, his operations commenced, when the British set fire to the *Orpheus*, *Lark*, *Juno* and *Cerberus* frigates, and several other vessels at the appearance of two of his fleet standing in near Providence island to attack them. The *Flora* and *Falcon* were sunk afterward. The next day the American troops marched from Providence to Tiverton under the command of gen. Greene, who had been dispatched by gen. Washington from the main army to assist in the expedition. His excellency also sent on the marquis de la Fayette at the head of two thousand troops, who by a rapid march joined the militia in season. Gen. Sullivan's first letter to the count informed him, that he was not ready to act, and desired that the attack might be suspended. It was agreed between them that they should land their forces at Portsmouth on the tenth in the morning. On the eighth the French fleet went up the middle passage leading into Newport harbour, when the British batteries began a severe cannonade, which was returned with great warmth.

The royal troops on the island, having been just reinforced with five battalions, were about 6000 under the command of Sir Robert Pigot, who took every possible measure of defence. The force under gen. Sullivan was composed of about 10,000 men. Upon his receiving intelligence early on the ninth, that the enemy had evacuated their works at the north end of the island, and retreated within their lines about three miles from Newport, regardless of the agreement with d'Estaing, he concluded (as it appeared to him best) to push over

without loss of time. The army was immediately put in motion; about eight o'clock the right wing, under gen. Greene, began to cross from Tiverton, and the rest of the Americans followed in order. The Massachusetts militia were attended by Mr. Hancock as their major general. About two in the afternoon a fleet consisting of near 25 sail was discovered standing in for Newport, which came to off point Judith for the night. Lord Howe had determined to attempt the preservation of the island; but notwithstanding all his exertions could not reach sight of it, till the day after the French fleet had entered the harbour. Though his own exceeded the other in point of number, yet it was far inferior with respect to effective force and weight of metal. He had one ship of 74 guns—seven of 64—five of 50—six from 44 to 32—and twelve smaller vessels, including fire ships and bomb ketches. When he first appeared, the garrison were much elated, but upon learning that he brought no provision, of which they were nearly exhausted, they were equally dejected. A sudden change of wind favoring the count, he stood out to sea with all his squadron, about eight o'clock the next morning. They were severely cannonaded as they passed by the batteries, but received no material damage. Howe deeming the weather gage too great an advantage to be added to the superior force of the count, contended for that object with all the skill of an experienced seaman; while the count was as eager to preserve it. This contest prevented an engagement on that day; but the wind on the following still continuing adverse to the design of Howe, he determined to make the best of present circumstances, and await the approach of the count. A strong gale which
which

1778, which increased to a violent tempest, and continued for near 48 hours, put by the engagement. Two of the French ships were dismasted, and others much damaged. The Languedoc of 90 guns, d'Estaing's own ship, lost her rudder and all her masts; and was met in that condition on the evening of the 13th, by the Renown of 50 guns. Capt. Dawson bore down without hoisting colours. The count ordered capt. Caleb Gardner, who was on board as a pilot, to hail him, that he might know what ship it was. Dawson made no answer, but ran with a full sail and fair wind till he was under the stern of the Languedoc, then hoisted English colours, fired in great and small shot, and musketry, and sailed off. The Languedoc upon that fired two chace guns after him, when he never attempted to approach her more. The same evening the Preston of 50 guns, commodore Hotham, fell in with the Tonant of 80 guns, with only her main-mast standing, and attacked her with spirit, but night put an end to the engagement. The junction of six sail of the French Squadron, prevented all further attempts upon their two disabled ships, by the Renown and Preston the next morning. On the 16th, the Isis of 50 guns, capt. Raynor, was chased by the Cæsar, capt. Bougainville, a French 74 gun. Neither had suffered in the tempest. A close and desperate engagement was maintained on both sides, with the greatest obstinacy, for an hour and a half, within pistol shot. The Cæsar at length put before the wind and sailed off, the captain having lost his arm, the lieutenant his leg, a number of men being killed and wounded, and the ship considerably damaged. The Isis had suffered so in her

Aug. 16. mast

masts and rigging, that she could not attempt a pursuit. 1778.

The troops under gen. Sullivan now demand our attention. When they had landed, they possessed themselves of the heights near the north end of the island. They suffered no less than the ships by the tempest. The wind blew most violently, attended with a flood of rain through the whole day of the 12th, and increased so at night, that not a marquee or tent could stand: several of the soldiers perished by the severity of the storm, many horses died, the greatest part of the ammunition delivered to the troops was damaged, and the condition of the army was deplorable. On the 14th, the storm was over, and the weather clear and fine. The garrison having enjoyed better accommodations and greater security than the Americans, Sir Robert Pigot had a fair opportunity of attacking the latter while dispirited and worn down by the painful scenes from which they had just emerged. Gen. Greene and some British officers are of opinion, that a bold and vigorous onset under these circumstances would have been highly proper and successful. But as nothing of this kind happened, the day was spent by the Americans in drying their clothes, &c. and getting in order for an advance. The next morning they marched at six o'clock, and took post about two miles from the British lines. By the 20th 20, they had opened two four gun batteries; but their approaches were slow. About two o'clock in the afternoon the French fleet was discovered standing for Newport. At seven gen. Greene and the marquis de la Fayette went on board the Languedoc, to consult upon measures proper to be pursued for the success of the expedition.

1778. dition in which they were engaged. They urged d'Estaing to return with his fleet into Newport harbour. He was apparently inclined to a compliance: but all the captains and principal officers on board were rather unfriendly to him. He being a land officer, they thought it an affront to their understandings, and a piece of injustice done to their merits and services to have him appointed to the command over their heads. They therefore crossed him in every measure, that looked like giving him any kind of reputation, in order if possible to bring him into disgrace. His instructions from the court of France were to go to Boston, if the fleet met with any misfortune, or if there appeared a superior British fleet upon the coast. The count had met with a misfortune, the *Cæsar* which had steered for Boston was missing, and a superior British fleet was expected. All the officers insisted upon his following the instructions, and entered into a formal protest against prosecuting the expedition any further. About twelve o'clock at night of the 21st, Greene and the marquis returned, and made a report of what had passed. The next day letters went on board from gens. Sullivan and Hancock; as also a protest dated—Camp before Newport, Aug. 22, 1778—and signed by John Sullivan, N. Greene, John Hancock, J. Glover, Ezek. Cornell, Wm. Whipple, John Tyler, Solomon Lovell, Jon. Fitconel. They protested in a solemn manner against the count's taking the fleet to Boston, as derogatory to the honor of France, contrary to the intention of his most Christian majesty and the interest of his nation, and destructive in the highest degree to the welfare of the United States of America, and highly injurious to the alliance formed between the

two nations. One of the reasons assigned for the protest 1775. was, that the army and stores collected for the reduction of the island would be liable to be lost, by an opportunity's being given to the enemy to cut off the communication with the main, and totally to prevent the retreat of the army. The best apology that can be made for this protest is, that it was designed as a finesse to induce the captains of the French fleet to consent to its returning into the harbour of Newport. But it had not this effect, and met with a spirited answer from the count, who sailed on the same day for Boston. Sullivan was so chagrined at the departure of the fleet, that contrary to all sound policy, he gave out in general orders on the 24th—"The general cannot help lamenting the sudden and unexpected departure of the French fleet, as he finds it has a tendency to discourage some who placed great dependence upon the assistance of it, though he can by no means suppose the army or any part of it endangered by this movement. He yet hopes the event will prove America able to procure that by her own arms, which her allies refuse to assist in obtaining." Two days after, in new orders, he endeavoured to smooth off the reflection contained in it, by declaring he meant not to insinuate that the departure of the French fleet was owing to a fixt determination not to assist in the enterprise, and would not wish to give the least colour to ungenerous and illiberal minds to make such unfair interpretations. Count d'Estaing, when arrived in Boston port, wrote to congress on the 26th, and in his letter mentioned—the embarrassments of the king's squadron as well on account of water as provisions, how his hopes were deceived with regard to these two articles,

1778. which were growing more and more important—that it was necessary for him to confine all his attention to the preservation of the Squadron, and restoring it to a condition to act—that he was no longer at liberty to depend on deceitful expectations of watering and getting provisions. He justified his repairing to Boston from the situation of his ships, the advices of a Squadron from Europe, the ignorance of what was become of Lord Howe's fleet, and the advantage that his lordship would have had for attacking him had he returned into Newport. He also expressed his displeasure at the protest.

It appears unreasonable to censure the count for repairing to Boston, when all his officers insisted so upon the measure; though had he returned into Newport, the garrison would most probably have capitulated before Howe could have succoured them. Upon the fleet's sailing for Boston, it was said—"There never was a prospect so favorable, blasted by such a shameful desertion." A universal clamor prevailed against the French nation: and letters were sent to Boston containing the most bitter invectives, tending to prejudice the inhabitants against d'Estaing and all his officers, to counteract which the cooler and more judicious part of the community employed their good services. Between two and three thousand volunteers returned in the course of 24 hours, and others continued to go off, and even many of the militia, so that in three days Sullivan's army was greatly decreased: it was soon little more in number than that of the enemy. An attempt to carry their works by storm, would have been too hazardous, had all the volunteers and militia remained, for the bulk of the troops had never been in action: the necessity of a retreat

retreat was therefore apparent (as soon as there was a cer-¹⁷⁷⁸
 tainty of the French fleet's being gone) though in the
 morning of the 23d the Americans had opened batteries
 consisting in the whole of 17 pieces of heavy artillery,
 2 ten inch mortars and three five and a half howitzers.
 Greene was against retreating hastily, lest the appearance
 of timidity and inferiority should bring out the enemy
 upon them: but he and Glover prepared for an expe-
 ditious retreat, in case Clinton should arrive with a re-
 inforcement, that so no damage might ensue from the
 delay. By the 26th all the spare heavy artillery and bag-
 gage was sent off the island; and on the 28th at night,
 between nine and ten o'clock, the army began to move
 to the north end. It had been that day resolved in a
 council of war, to remove thither, fortify the camp, se-
 cure a communication with the main, and hold the
 ground, till it could be known whether the French fleet
 would soon return to their assistance. The marquis de
 la Fayette by request of the general officers, set off for
 Boston to request their speedy return. The count could
 not consent to the return of the fleet, but made a spirited
 offer of leading the troops under his command from
 Boston, and of co-operating against Rhode-Island. The
 march of Sullivan's army was conducted with great or-
 der and regularity, and the troops arrived on their ground
 about three in the morning, with all the baggage, stores,
 &c. About seven, they were alarmed by a brisk fire ^{Aug.}
 of musketry in their front, between their advanced corps ^{29.}
 of infantry and the enemy, who had pushed out after
 them upon discovering the retreat. Sullivan asked the
 opinion of the generals upon the occasion, and Greene
 advised to march and meet them, for he truly supposed
 M 3 that

1778. that they were come out in small detachments which might be cut to pieces; and further apprehended, that by advancing in force upon the western road, they might possibly head that part of the enemy which marched down upon the eastern, and so unexpectedly possess themselves of Newport. Had this measure been adopted, the Americans would probably have gained very great advantages, as the whole of the enemy's force on the western road consisted only of the Hessian chaffeurs and the Anspach regiments of Voit and Seaboth under gen. Lofsberg. On the east road was gen. Smith with the 22d and 43d regiments, and the flank companies of the 38th and 54th. To the latter were opposed col. Henry B. Livingston and his light troops; to the former lieut. col. Laurens with his. The enemy's superiority in numbers obliged each to give way, but a retreating fire was kept up with the greatest order. The advanced corps being reinforced, they gave the enemy a check, made a gallant resistance, and at length repulsed them. But the British commander sending reinforcements to both Lofsberg and Smith, the Americans were obliged to retire nigh to the front line of the main army, which was drawn up in order of battle. The British advanced very near to the American left, but were repulsed by Glover, and retired to Quaker-hill. The royal troops soon availed themselves of two heights on Sullivan's right; where they placed several pieces of artillery, and began about nine o'clock, a severe cannonade on a redoubt, an advanced post on his right, which was returned with double force. Skirmishing continued between the advanced parties until near ten; when two British sloops of war and other armed vessels, having gained his right

right flank and began a fire, their associates on land^{1778.} bent their force that way, endeavoured to turn Sullivan's right under cover of the ships, and to take his advanced redoubt; which brought on a warm and brisk fire of musketry between the contending parties, that was kept up by each side's throwing in reinforcements, till the action became in some degree general, and near 1200 Americans were engaged. The last of these that were sent forward, got up just in time to prevent the success of the enemy, who were making their third effort to take the redoubt: but they were broken, and retreated to the heights in great confusion, leaving on the field many of their killed and wounded. After the retreat, the field of battle could not be approached by either party, without being exposed to the cannon of the other army. The heat of the action was from two till near three o'clock in the afternoon. The firing of artillery continued through the day; the musketry with intermission six hours. The Americans make their loss in killed 30, in wounded 132, and in missing 44. The British account makes their killed 38, wounded 210, and missing 12. Gen. Greene in a letter to the commander in chief said, "Our troops behaved with great spirit, and the brigade of militia under gen. Lovell, advanced with great resolution, and in good order, and stood the fire of the enemy with great firmness. Lieut. col. Livingston, col. Jackson, and col. H. B. Livingston, did themselves great honor, in the transactions of the day, but it is not in my power to do justice to col. Laurens, who acted both the general and partizan. His command of regular troops was small, but he did every thing possible to be done by their numbers." The brigade under gen.

1778. Lovell belonged to the Massachusetts. Greene who commanded in the attack did himself the highest honor by the judgment and bravery he exhibited. He attended strictly to the action the whole time, watching the movements of the enemy, and where to throw in the necessary reinforcements. Gen. Sullivan the next morning received advice, that lord Howe had again failed, that a fleet was off Block Island, and that d'Estaing could not come so soon as he expected, on which it was concluded to evacuate Rhode Island. The sentries of both armies being within 400 yards of each other, the greatest attention was requisite. To cover the design of retreating, a number of tents were brought forward, and pitched in sight of the enemy, and the whole army employed in fortifying the camp. At the same time the heavy baggage and stores were falling back and crossing through the bay. At dark the tents were struck, the light baggage and troops passed down, and by twelve o'clock the main army had crossed. It was about that time when the marquis de la Fayette arrived from Boston. He was most sensibly mortified that he was not in the action. That he might not be out of the way in case of one, he had rode from the island to Boston, near 70 miles distant, in seven hours, and returned in six and a half. He got back time enough to bring off the picquets, and other parties, that covered the retreat of the army, which he did in excellent order: not a man was left behind, nor the smallest article lost. The honor arising from so good a retreat, though great, did not compensate for the sore disappointment gen. Sullivan met with, when in full expectation of taking Newport. The place must have fallen had not count d'Estaing

taing left the harbour; or had he returned after chasing 1773.
lord Howe to a considerable distance. The glory of
vanquishing a British squadron, and of obtaining a tri-
umph over a first rate naval officer, and a country against
which he had a personal animosity (though in prospect
only) tempted him as may be thought, into a situation
that proved the ruin of the principal object in view, when
he steered from before Sandy Hook for Newport, and
agreed upon a co-operation with Sullivan's army. The
fleet off Block Island was bound for Rhode Island, and
had on board Sir Henry Clinton with about 4000 troops.
Sir Henry hoped to have effected a landing, so as to
have made Sullivan's retreat very precarious, but the
latter was completed the night before his arrival. The Sept.
day after, Lord Howe, who had changed his course 1.
upon hearing that d'Estaing had left Rhode Island, ar-
rived off the entrance of Boston port in the evening.
Upon observing the position of the French fleet, and
deeming every attempt against them ineligible, he left
the Boston coast the next morning: but his appearance
in and standing up the bay to the entrance of the port,
spread a prodigious alarm. Sir Henry being disappoint-
ed, returned for New York; but off New London left
the fleet, with directions to gen. Grey to proceed to Bed-
ford and the neighbourhood, where several American
privateers resorted, and a number of captured ships lay.
They reached the place of destination on the fifth of 5.
September; the troops were immediately landed, and
between six in the evening and twelve the following day,
destroyed about 70 sail of shipping, beside a number
of small craft. They also burnt the magazines, wharfs,
stores, warehouses, vessels on the stocks, all the dwelling
houses

1778. houses at M^rPherson's wharf, and the principal part of the houses at the head of the river, together with the mills and some houses on the east side of the river. Bedford, or as it is frequently called Dartmouth, suffered to the amount of near 20,000*l.* sterling in ratable property, viz. buildings. The other articles destroyed were worth a much more considerable sum. The troops proceeded from thence to Martha's Vineyard, where they destroyed a few vessels, and made a requisition of the militia arms, the public money, 300 oxen, and 10,000 sheep, which was complied with. The last contribution was a most desirable one, and afforded a grateful repast to thousands upon being safely conveyed to New York.

Here let me close our account of military operations, with an extract from gen. Washington's letter of August the 20th, and then attend to the negotiations of the British commissioners and the acts of congress. His excellency thus expressed himself—"It is not a little pleasing, nor less wonderful to contemplate, that after two years manœuvring and undergoing the strangest vicissitudes, that perhaps ever attended any one contest since the creation, both armies are brought back to the very point they set out from, and that what was the offending party in the beginning, is now reduced to the use of the spade and pick-axe for defence. The hand of Providence has been so conspicuous in all this, that he must be worse than an infidel that lacks faith, and more than wicked that has not gratitude enough to acknowledge his obligations."

Governor Johnstone, meaning to avail himself of former connections, endeavoured to commence or renew
a pri-

a private correspondence, with several members of congress, and other persons of consideration. In his letters to them he used a freedom with the authority under which he acted, not customary with those intrusted with delegated power, and afforded such a degree of approbation to the conduct of the Americans in the past resistance which they had made, as is seldom granted by negotiators to their opponents. In a letter to Joseph Reed esq; of April the 11th, he said—"The man who can be instrumental in bringing us all to act once more in harmony, and to unite together the various powers which this contest has drawn forth, will deserve more from the king and people, from patriotism, humanity and all the tender ties that are affected by the quarrel and reconciliation, than ever was yet bestowed on human kind." On the 16th of June he wrote to Robert Morris esq;—"I believe the men who have conducted the affairs of America incapable of being influenced by improper motives; but in all such transactions there is risk, and I think that whoever ventures should be secured; at the same time, that honor and emolument should naturally follow the fortune of those who have steered the vessel in the storm, and brought her safely to port. I think Washington and the president have a right to every favor that grateful nations can bestow, if they could once more unite our interest, and spare the miseries and devastations of war." On Sunday the 21st of June, June 21. Mr. Reed received a written message from Mrs. Ferguson, expressing a desire to see him on business, which could not be committed to writing. On his attending in the evening agreeable to her appointment, after some previous conversation, she enlarged upon the great talents

1778. lents and amiable qualities of gov. Johnstone, and added, that in several conversations with her, he had expressed the most favorable sentiments of Mr. Reed; that it was particularly wished to engage his interest to promote the objects of the British commissioners, viz. a re-union of the two countries, if consistent with his principles and judgment; and that in such case it could not be deemed unbecoming or improper in the British government to take a favorable notice of such conduct; and that in this instance Mr. Reed might have ten thousand pounds sterling, and any office in the colonies in his majesty's gift. Mr. Reed finding an answer was expected, replied—" *I am not worth purchasing, but such as I am the king of Great Britain is not rich enough to do it.*" However right the principles might be, on which

July 9. this insinuating scheme of conciliation was adopted, its effects were untoward. On the 9th of July, congress ordered—" That all letters received by members of congress from any of the British commissioners or their agents, or from any subject of the king of Great Britain, of a public nature, be laid before congress." The above letters being communicated, and Mr. Reed making a

Aug. 11. declaration of what has been above related, congress resolved that the same " cannot but be considered as direct attempts to corrupt and bribe the congress—That as congress feel, so they ought to demonstrate, the highest and most pointed indignation against such daring and atrocious attempts to corrupt their integrity—And that it is incompatible with the honor of congress to hold any manner of correspondence or intercourse with the said George Johnstone esq; especially to negotiate with him upon affairs in which the cause of liberty is

con-

concerned." Their proceedings in this business were 1778.
 expressed in the form of a declaration, a copy of which
 was ordered to be signed by the president and sent by
 a flag to the commissioners at New York. This decla-
 ration drew out an exceeding angry and vehement one
 from the gentleman in question, in which the immediate
 operations of passion were rather too apparent. The
 tone of his publication accorded but badly with the high
 and flattering eulogiums which he had so lately bestowed
 on the Americans, in those very letters which were the
 subject of the present contest. It was dated the 26th 26.
 of August, and transmitted to congress: together with
 a declaration of the same date from lord Carlisle, Sir
 Henry Clinton, and Mr. Eden, which went to a total
 and solemn disavowal, so far as related to the present
 subject, of their having had any knowledge, directly or
 indirectly, of those matters specified by congress. The
 declarations were accompanied by a requisition from
 the three last named commissioners respecting the troops
 lately serving under gen. Burgoyne, in which they offered
 to ratify the convention, and required permission for the Sept.
 embarkation of the troops. But congress resolved, 4-
 "That no ratification of the convention, which may
 be tendered in consequence of powers, which only reach
 that case by construction and implication, or which may
 subject whatever is transacted relative to it to the future
 approbation or disapprobation of the parliament of Great
 Britain, can be accepted by congress."

When all hope of further negotiation with congress
 was at an end, the commissioners directed their future
 publications in the manner of appeals to the people at
 large; whereby they seemingly realized the charge re-
 2 peatedly

repeatedly made, that their only object was, under the insidious appearance of conciliation, to excite either a separation among the colonies, or the people to tumults against their respective governments. Congress not only permitted, but forwarded the republicanism of all matters upon the subject; while different American writers undertook to obviate the effect, which the publications issued by the commissioners might have upon the body of the people. The strongest argument which the Americans advanced upon the occasion was, that they had already concluded a solemn treaty with France for the establishment and on the footing of their independence; that should they break their faith with France, they would forfeit their credit with all foreign nations, be considered as faithless and infamous, and for evermore be cut off from even the hope of foreign succour; and that at the same time they should be thrown on the mercy of those, who had already pursued every measure of fraud, force, cruelty and deceit, for their destruction; as neither the king, the ministers, nor the parliament of Great Britain, would be under the necessity of ratifying any one condition which they agreed upon with the commissioners; or, if they even found it necessary to ratify them for present purposes, it would be only to call a new parliament and then to undo the whole.

Oct. 3. The appeals of the commissioners to the people proving ineffectual, they changed their conduct and denounced hostility and destruction, in their most terrific forms, to those who had rejected conciliation and friendship. They published a signal valedictory manifesto and proclamation; and therein warned the people of the total and material change which was to take place in the future

future conduct of hostilities, should they still persevere¹⁷⁷⁴ in their obstinacy; and more especially as that was said to be founded upon the pretended alliance with France. The Americans were virtually threatened with all the extremes of war, and to have their country desolated. Be it noted that "The concessions made in the manifesto and proclamation by the commissioners, contain a renunciation of every principle upon which the king's ministers have pretended to justify the foundation, or the pursuit of any one object of the war. Thus the irretrievable disgrace of having waged a cruel war for unjustifiable and destructive ends, is fixed upon Britain, by a public avowal upon principle, that the terms offered by America in 1774, before the war, ought to have been accepted as foundations of peace, from their own intrinsic equity and merit, as being *more beneficial to the mother country and more safe to all parties* *." Several packages of manifestos, which enclosed a number translated into the German language, and one printed on vellum and signed by lord Carlisle, Sir Henry Clinton and William Eden esq; were made up in order to be sent with flags to congress and the particular states in the union. Congress upon being informed of it, declared¹⁶ that the agents employed to distribute the said papers were not entitled to protection from a flag, while engaged in the prosecution of such nefarious purposes; and recommended it to the several states to secure and keep them in close custody, but at the same time to print the manifestos in the newspapers, to convince the people of the insidious designs of the commissioners. They³⁰ also published a manifesto on their part, in which they

* Hartley.

1778. complained bitterly of the mode practised by the British in carrying on the war, of the treatment their soldiers and sailors had met with, and of their meanly assailing the representatives of America with bribes, with deceit, and the servility of adulation. After other charges, expressed in the severest language, they concluded with solemnly declaring—"If our enemies presume to execute their threats, or persist in their present career of barbarity, we will take such exemplary vengeance as shall deter others from a like conduct. We appeal to that God who searcheth the hearts of men, for the rectitude of our intentions; and in his holy presence declare, that as we are not moved by any light and hasty suggestions of anger or revenge, so, through every possible change of fortune, we will adhere to this our determination."

The commission has been attended with the singular circumstance of a letter from the marquis de la Fayette to the earl of Carlisle, challenging that nobleman, as first commissioner, to the field, there to answer in his own person, and in single combat, for some harsh reflection on the conduct of the French court and nation, which appeared in those public instruments, that he and his brethren had issued in their political capacity. The inexperience and heat of youth hurried him into this impropriety against the advice of his warmest American friends, who foresaw that his challenge would of necessity be slighted.

The other proceedings of congress, which have been passed over, while the negotiation has been considered, are now to be related.

Congress

Congress being convinced by experience, that the regulation of prices was an evil, and increased instead of lessening the difficulties it was meant to cure, recommended in the beginning of June, to the several legislatures that had adopted the measure, the suspension or repeal of their laws for that purpose. The commissary general, col. Wadsworth, had no hope of feeding the army, while the regulating acts prevailed. Before the recommendation it was supplied by a violation of the acts, or by contracts made ere they took place. Congress adjourned to meet the Thursday following at the state-house in Philadelphia. When a sufficient number of states were represented, they had before them a packet of letters which had passed between gen. Heath and gen. Phillips, consequent to the death of lieut. Richard Brown of the 21st British regiment belonging to the convention troops at Cambridge. He determined upon passing the lines on the 17th of June (in a chaise, between two women of easy virtue) contrary to general orders. The sentry upon stopping him was treated with contempt. The lieutenant would go on without assigning any reason, though repeatedly ordered to stop, on which the sentry shot him through the head at Prospect hill. The language of Phillips's letter upon the occasion was so offensive, that Heath confined him to his quarters, under a guard; and insisted on his signing a new parole. These measures produced other letters pro and con. The whole were submitted to the inspection of congress, who approved of Heath's conduct.

They had before them a paper from Mr. Gerard, wherein he thanked them for the quick dispatch with which they had provided for the first wants of the French

1778. Squadron; it was accompanied with a memorandum of the provisions that would be further wanted. Congress meaning to procure it upon the easiest terms, appointed a committee to make the purchases; but Mr. Chase, one of the Maryland delegates, improved the knowledge his seat secured him, for directing in season a private acquaintance to buy; and thereby counteracted the committee so effectually, that they could not answer the end of their appointment. It is no extravagant conjecture, that Mr. Chase shared in the profits made by his communications.

Aug.
6.

The honorable sieur Gerard was introduced to an audience by two members of congress appointed for the purpose, and being seated in his chair, his secretary delivered to the president a letter from his most christian majesty, informing his *very dear great friends and allies*, that he had nominated the sieur Gerard, to reside among them in the quality of minister plenipotentiary. The minister was, after the reading of it, announced to the house; whereupon he arose and addressed congress in a speech, which when finished in the French language, was delivered by his secretary to the president; to which the latter returned an answer in English. A profusion of compliments passed upon the occasion, in the hearing and presence of a numerous audience; for the vice-president, the supreme executive council, the speaker and assembly of Pennsylvania, were invited to be there; and each member of congress had the liberty of giving two tickets for the admittance of other persons. An entertainment given by congress to the sieur Gerard, closed the novel, important, and joyful transactions of the day.

Congress resolved upon an application to Sir Henry Clinton for passports to American vessels to transport provisions and fuel to Boston for the use of the convention troops; and that if such passports were not granted within three days after application, or measures adopted by him for supplying them by the 5th of October, they would deem themselves justifiable in removing the said troops to such parts of the United States as they can be best subsisted in. The applications to Sir Henry having had no effect, they resolved on the 16th of October, that the necessary steps should be taken for removing, with all convenient speed, the convention prisoners to Charlotte-ville, in Albemarle county, Virginia.

Congress proceeded to the election of a minister plenipotentiary to the court of France, and the ballots being taken, Doctor Benjamin Franklin was elected. In their instructions to him on the 26th of October, he was directed to obtain, if possible, the French king's consent for expunging from the treaty of commerce the 11th and 12th articles, as inconsistent with that equality and reciprocity which form the best security for perpetuating the whole. The marquis de la Fayette had entered into arrangements with congress for co-operating with the court of France in an expedition against Canada; the plan of which the doctor was also to lay before the minister. It was proposed that 4 or 5000 French troops should be sent to assist in the business. The marquis's attachment to the American cause and thirst for glory, would naturally engage him in such a project (wherein he would be likely to hold a considerable command) with the utmost purity of intention. But how far Mr. Gerard might artfully insinuate the first idea into his

1778. mind, in expectation of introducing a larger body of French troops into Canada for distant political purposes, to which the marquis was a total stranger, cannot be easily ascertained. The doctor was to inculcate the certainty of ruining the British fishery on the banks of Newfoundland, and consequently the British marine by reducing Halifax and Quebec. The importance of such reduction to France on the one hand, and to America on the other, was stated.

The following observations on the finances of America were likewise to be communicated to the French minister.

“At the commencement of the war, it was obvious that the permanent revenues and resources of Great Britain must eventually overbalance the sudden and impetuous sallies of men contending for freedom on the spur of the occasion, without regular discipline, determinate plan, or permanent means of defence.—America having never been much taxed, nor for a continued length of time, being without fixed government, and contending against what was once the lawful authority, had no funds to support the war; and the contest being upon the very question of taxation, the levying of imposts, unless from the last necessity, would have been madness.—To borrow from individuals without any visible means of repaying them, while the loss was certain from ill success, was visionary.—A measure therefore which had been early adopted, and thence became familiar to the people, was pursued: this was the issuing of paper notes representing specie, for the redemption of which the public faith was pledged.—As these were to circulate from hand to hand, there was no great individual

vidual risk unless from holding them too long, and no¹⁷⁷⁸. man refused to receive them for one commodity, while they would purchase every other.—This general credit however did not last long. It menaced so deeply the views of our enemies, who had built their hopes on the defeat of our resources, that they and their partizans used every effort to impeach its value. Their success in one instance of this kind, alway made room for another, because he who could not relieve his wants with our paper, would not part with his property to procure it.—To remedy this evil, the states as soon as formed into any shape of legislature, enacted laws to make the continental paper a lawful tender, and indeed to determine its value, fixing it by penalties at the sum of specie expressed on the face of it. These laws produced monopoly throughout.—The monopoly of commodities, the interruption of commerce, and the successes of the enemy, produced a depreciation: the laws devised to remedy this evil, either increased or were followed by an increase of it.—This demanded more plentiful emissions, thereby increasing the circulating medium to such a degree as not only to exclude all others, but furnish a superabundant quantity to increase the depreciation.—The several states, instead of laying taxes to defray their own private expences, followed the example of congress, and issued notes of different denominations and forms. Therefore to counterfeit became easier, and the enemy did not neglect to avail themselves of this great though base advantage, and hence arose a further depreciation.—Calling the husbandman frequently to arms, who had indeed lost the incitements to industry from the cheapness of the necessaries of life in the beginning, compared

1778. with other articles which took a more rapid rise, soon reduced that abundance which preceded the war: this added to the greater consumption, together with the ravages and subsistence of the enemy, at length pointed the depreciation to the means of support.—The issues from this moment became enormous, and consequently increased the disease from which they arose, and which must soon have become fatal, had not the successes of America, and the alliance with France, kept it from sinking entirely. The certainty of its redemption being now evident, we only suffer from the quantity.—This however not only impairs the value simply in itself, but as it calls for continued large emissions, & the certainty that every thing will be dearer than it is, renders every thing dearer than it otherwise would be; and vice versa could we possibly absorb a part of the inundation which overwhelms us, every thing would be cheaper from the certainty that it would become cheaper.—The money can be absorbed but three ways.—The first is by taxation, which cannot reach the evil while the war continues; because the emissions must continue, to supply what is necessary over and above even the nominal produce of taxes; and the taxes cannot be very productive, by reason of the possession of part and ravagement of other parts of the country by the enemy; and also from the weakness of governments yet in their infancy, and not arrived to that power, method and firmness, which are the portion of elder states.—The second method is by borrowing, and is not efficient, because no interest can tempt men to lend paper now, which paid together with that interest in paper a year hence, will not probably be worth half as much as the principal sum is at present; and

1778.

and whenever the case shall alter, then in proportion to the depreciation will be the loss of the public in what they borrow, to say nothing of the enormous burdens for which they must pay interest in specie, or what is equal to it, if so much as what hath been emitted could be borrowed, as to render the remainder equally valuable with silver.—The last method is by very considerable loans or subsidies in Europe, and is the only mode at once equal to the effect desired, and free from the foregoing exceptions; for if such a sum is drawn for, at the advanced exchange, as by taking up the greatest part of our paper to reduce the exchange to par, the paper then remaining will be fully appreciated, and the sum due will not nominally, and therefore in the event not actually exceed its real value.—But to this mode there are objections: 1. subsidies by any means equal to our necessities can hardly be expected, while our allies, being engaged in a war, will want all the money they can procure; and 2. loans cannot probably be obtained without good guarantee, or other security which America may not perhaps be able to procure or give.—But until our finances can be in a better situation, the war cannot possibly be prosecuted with vigor; and the efforts made, feeble as they must be, will be attended with an oppressive weight of expence, rendering still more weak the confederated states.—This will appear from the foregoing observations, and also from hence, that the present, and in all probability the future seat of the war, (that is, the middle states) is so exhausted, that unless by the strenuous voluntary exertions of the inhabitants, no great number of men can possibly be subsisted; and

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1778: such exertions cannot be expected without the temptation of money more valued than ours is at present."

Five days before the date of the instructions above related, congress upon the application of the marquis de la Fayette granted him leave to return to France, and directed the president to write him a letter of thanks for that disinterested zeal which led him to America, and for the services he had rendered to the United States by the exertion of his courage and abilities on many signal occasions. They also ordered Dr. Franklin to cause an elegant sword, with proper devices, to be made and presented to him in the name of the United States: and crowned the whole with a letter recommending him to his most christian majesty. The marquis took leave of congress by letter of the 26th of October. The next day when it was received, a letter from the marquis was read, giving an account of the brave conduct of capt. Tonzar, in taking possession of a piece of artillery from the enemy, in which action he lost his right arm; whereupon congress promoted him to the rank of lieutenant colonel in the service of the United States, by brevet, and appointed him a pension for life of thirty dollars per month.

Let us resume our narration of military operations.

So early as the 8th of February, gen. Schuyler wrote to congress—"There is too much reason to believe, that an expedition will be formed (by the Indians) against the western frontiers of this state (New York) Virginia and Pennsylvania." The next month he informed them—"A number of Mohawks, and many of the Onondagoes, Cayugas, and Senecas will commence hostilities against us as soon as they can; it would be prudent therefore early to take measures to carry the war into their country; it would require

require no greater body of troops to destroy their towns 1778. than to protect the frontier inhabitants." No effectual measures being taken to repress the hostile spirit of the Indians, numbers joined the tory refugees, and with these commenced their horrid depredations and hostilities upon the back settlers, being headed by col. Butler and Brandt, an half blooded Indian, of desperate courage, ferocious and cruel beyond example. Their expeditions were carried on to great advantage, by the exact knowledge which the refugees possessed of every object of their enterprise, and the immediate intelligence they received from their friends on the spot. The weight of their hostilities fell upon the fine, new and flourishing settlement of Wyoming, situated on the eastern branch of the Susquehanna, in a most beautiful country and delightful climate. It was settled and cultivated with great ardor by a number of people from Connecticut, which claims the territory as included in its original grant from Charles II. The settlement consisted of eight townships, each five miles square, beautifully placed on each side of the river. It had increased so by a rapid population, that the settlers sent a thousand men to serve in the continental army. To provide against the dangers of their remote situation, four forts were constructed to cover them from the irruptions of the Indians. But it was their unhappiness, to have a considerable mixture of royalists among them; and the two parties were actuated by sentiments of the most violent animosity, which was not confined to particular families or places; but creeping within the roofs and to the hearths and floors where it was least to be expected, served equally to poison the sources of domestic security and

1778. and happiness, and to cancel the laws of nature and humanity.

They had frequent and timely warnings of the danger to which they were exposed by sending their best men to so great a distance. Their quiet had been interrupted by the Indians, joined by marauding parties of their own countrymen, in the preceding year; and it was only by a vigorous opposition, in a course of successful skirmishes, that they had been driven off. Several Tories, and others not before suspected, had then and since abandoned the settlement; and beside a perfect knowledge of all their particular circumstances, carried along with them such a stock of private resentment, as could not fail of directing the fury, and even giving an edge to the cruelty of their Indian and other inveterate enemies. An unusual number of strangers had come among them under various pretences, whose behaviour became so suspicious, that upon being taken up and examined, such evidence appeared against several of them, of their acting in concert with the enemy, on a scheme for the destruction of the settlements, that about twenty were sent off to Connecticut to be there imprisoned and tried for their lives, while the remainder were expelled. These measures excited the rage of the Tories in general to the most extreme degree; and the threats formerly denounced against the settlers, were now renewed with aggravated vengeance.

As the time approached for the final catastrophe, the Indians practised unusual treachery. For several weeks previous to the intended attack, they repeatedly sent small parties to the settlement, charged with the strongest professions of friendship. These parties, beside attempt-

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ing to lull the people in security, answered the purposes¹⁷⁷⁸ of communicating with their friends, and of observing the present state of affairs. The settlers however were not insensible to the danger. They had taken the alarm, and col. Zebulon Butler had several times written letters to congress and gen. Washington, acquainting them with the danger the settlement was in, and requesting assistance; but the letters were never received, having been intercepted by the Pennsylvania tories. A little before the main attack, some small parties made sudden irruptions, and committed several robberies and murders; and from ignorance or a contempt of all ties whatever, massacred the wife and five children of one of the persons sent for trial to Connecticut in their own cause.

At length, in the beginning of July, the enemy suddenly appeared in full force on the Susquehanna, headed by col. John Butler, a Connecticut tory, and cousin to col. Zeb. Butler, the second in command in the settlement. He was assisted by most of those leaders, who had rendered themselves terrible in the present frontier war. Their force was about 1600 men, near a fourth Indians, led by their own chiefs: the others were so disguised and painted as not to be distinguished from the Indians, excepting their officers, who being dressed in regimentals, carried the appearance of regulars. One of the smaller forts, garrisoned chiefly by tories, was given up or rather betrayed. Another was taken by storm, and all but the women and children massacred in the most inhuman manner.

Colonel Zeb. Butler, leaving a small number to guard^{3.} fort Wilkesborough, crossed the river with about 400 men, and marched into Kingston fort, whither the women,
men,

1778. men, children and defenceless of all sorts crowded for protection. He suffered himself to be enticed by his cousin to abandon the fortress. He agreed to march out, and hold a conference with the enemy in the open field (at so great a distance from the fort, as to shut out all possibility of protection from it) upon their withdrawing according to their own proposal, in order to the holding of a parley for the conclusion of a treaty. He at the same time marched out about 400 men well armed, being nearly the whole strength of the garrison, to guard his person to the place of parley, such was his distrust of the enemy's designs. On his arrival he found nobody to treat with, and yet advanced toward the foot of the mountain, where at a distance he saw a flag, the holders of which, seemingly afraid of treachery on his side, retired as he advanced; whilst he, endeavouring to remove this pretended ill-impression, pursued the flag, till his party was thoroughly enclosed, when he was suddenly freed from his delusion, by finding it attacked at once on every side. He and his men, notwithstanding the surprise and danger, fought with resolution and bravery, and kept up so continual and heavy a fire for three quarters of an hour, that they seemed to gain a marked superiority. In this critical moment, a soldier through a sudden impulse of fear, or premeditated treachery, cried out aloud—"the colonel has ordered a retreat." The fate of the party was now at once determined. In the state of confusion that ensued, an unresisted slaughter commenced, while the enemy broke in on all sides without obstruction. Col. Zeb. Butler, and about seventy of his men escaped, the latter got across the river to fort Wilkesborough, the colonel made his

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way to fort Kingston; which was invested the next day 1778.
 on the land side. The enemy, to sadden the drooping ^{July}
 spirits of the weak remaining garrison, sent in for their 4
 contemplation the bloody scalps of a hundred and ninety-six of their late friends and comrades. They kept up a continual fire upon the fort the whole day. In the evening the colonel quitted the fort and went down the river with his family. He is thought to be the only officer that escaped.

Colonel Nathan Dennison, who succeeded to the command, seeing the impossibility of an effectual defence, went with a flag to col. John Butler, to know what terms he would grant on a surrender: to which application Butler answered with more than savage phlegm in two short words—the *batchet*. Dennison having defended the fort, till most of the garrison were killed or disabled, was compelled to surrender at discretion. Some of the unhappy persons in the fort were carried away alive, but the barbarous conquerors, to save the trouble of murder in detail, shut up the rest promiscuously in the houses and barracks; which having set on fire, they enjoyed the savage pleasure of beholding the whole consumed in one general blaze.

They then crossed the river to the only remaining fort, Wilkesborough, which in hopes of mercy surrendered without demanding any conditions. They found about seventy continental soldiers, who had been engaged merely for the defence of the frontiers, whom they butchered with every circumstance of horrid cruelty. The remainder of the men, with the women and children, were shut up as before in the houses, which being set on fire, they perished altogether in the flames.

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1778. A general scene of devastation was now spread through all the townships. Fire, sword, and the other different instruments of destruction alternately triumphed. The settlements of the tories alone generally escaped, and appeared as islands in the midst of the surrounding ruin. The merciless ravagers having destroyed the main objects of their cruelty, directed their animosity to every part of living nature belonging to them; shot and destroyed some of their cattle, and cut out the tongues of others, leaving them still alive to prolong their agonies.

The following are a few of the more singular circumstances of the barbarity practised in the attack upon Wyoming. Capt. Bedlock, who had been taken prisoner, being stripped naked, had his body stuck full of splinters of pine knots*, and then a heap of pine knots piled around him; the whole was then set on fire, and his two companions, capt. Ranson and Durgee, thrown alive into the flames and held down with pitchforks. The returned tories, who had at different times abandoned the settlement in order to join in those savage expeditions, were the most distinguished for their cruelty; in this they resembled the tories that joined the British forces. One of these Wyoming tories, whose mother had married a second husband, butchered with his own hands, both her, his father-in-law, his own sisters and their infant children. Another, who during his absence had sent home several threats against the life of his father, now not only realized them in person, but was himself, with his own hands, the exterminator of his whole

* Pine knots are so replete with turpentine, that they are fired and used at night to illuminate the room; and lighted splinters are often carried about in the houses of the Carolina planters instead of candles.

family, mother, brothers and sisters, and mingled their blood in one common carnage, with that of the ancient husband and father. The broken parts and scattered relics of families, consisting mostly of women and children, who had escaped to the woods during the different scenes of this devastation, suffered little less than their friends, who had perished in the ruin of their houses. Dispersed and wandering in the forests, as chance and fear directed, without provision or covering, they had a long tract of country to traverse, and many without doubt perished in the woods. But whatever distresses and cruelties have been experienced by the Wyoming settlers, the British cause, so far from being served by them, is much injured, through the bitter and lasting resentment they fix in the minds of the Americans.

Some expeditions were undertaken on the other side by the Americans. Col. Clarke's through the Indian country, which commenced last summer, is worthy of particular observation from the successful spirit of enterprise, courage and prudence, with which it was conducted.

The colonel left Virginia with a small party of between 2 and 300 men. The object in view was the reduction of the French settlements planted by the Canadians on the Upper Mississippi, in the Illinois country; and at so vast a distance, that they were obliged to traverse no less than about 1200 miles of an uncultivated and uninhabited wilderness. Much of the mischief which had fallen upon the southern and middle states, from the incursions of the Indians, had been attributed to the governor of those settlements, who beside acting as an agent for the British government, and paying large rewards for scalps, had been indefatigable in attempting to

excite

1778. excite the Ohio and Mississippi Indians to undertake expeditions against the frontiers. This conduct was the motive to the present enterprise. The party, after a long course down the Monongahela, and a voyage on the Ohio, arrived at the great falls of the latter, within about 60 miles of its mouth; where they hid their boats, and bent their course by land to the northward. In this stage of the expedition, after consuming all the provision they had been able to carry on their backs, they endured a hard march of two days without any sustenance. They therefore, when arrived in this hungry state, about midnight, at the town of Kaskaskias, were unanimously determined to take it or perish in the attempt.

The town contained about 250 houses, and was sufficiently fortified to have withstood a much stronger enemy; but distance having forbidden all idea of danger among the inhabitants, of course superseded all precaution against surprise. Both town and fort were taken without noise or opposition, before the people were well awake, and the inhabitants were so effectually secured, that not a person escaped to alarm the neighbouring settlements. The governor, Philip Rocheblave, was sent to Virginia, with all the written instructions he had received from Quebec, Detroit, and Michillimackinack, for setting on the Indians, and paying them great rewards for the scalps of the Americans. The inhabitants were required to take an oath of allegiance to the United States, and the fort became the head quarters of the victors.

A small detachment pushed forward from this place on horseback, and surprised and took with as little difficulty three other French towns, lying from fifteen to about

about seventy miles further up the Mississippi. The inhabitants in them and the neighbouring country made no difficulty of transferring their allegiance, which they would reasonably conclude could not be refused with safety, as they might naturally imagine the enemy was in force, being in the heart of the country: the dangerous situation of this small corps in the inner part of the Indian territory, at the back of some of the most cruel and hostile tribes, in the track of many others, and more or less in the way of all, was converted to peculiar advantage, by the extraordinary activity and unwearied spirit of the commander. He directed and timed his attacks with such judgment, and executed them with such silence and dispatch, that the Indians found their own mode of war effectually turned upon them. Surprised in their inmost retreats, and most sequestered recesses, at those times and seasons, when they were scarcely less disposed for action, than unprepared for defence, they experienced in their own wigwams and families, that unexpected slaughter and destruction, which they had so frequently carried home to others. Upon this they grew cautious and timid; and the continual danger to which their families were exposed, damped the ardor of their warriors for hostile expeditions.

Sir Henry Clinton, on the return of the troops from the Bedford expedition, determined upon another to Egg harbour, on the Jersey coast, where the Americans had a number of privateers and prizes, and some considerable salt works. To draw away the attention of the Americans, and to procure at the same time forage and fresh provisions for the army, lord Cornwallis advanced into Jersey with a strong body of troops, while genl

1778. Knyphausen advancing with another division of the army, took a position on the east side of the North River, by which only the two divisions were separated; so that by means of their boats they could unite their whole force on either side of it, within twenty-four hours. Lieut. col. Baylor's regiment of light horse, with some militia, were detached to watch and interrupt the foragers. The colonel, it is to be feared, in order to avoid being under gen. Wynd's command, went with his men into the mouth of the British, and there lay in a state of unsoldiery security, which induced lord Cornwallis to form a plan for surprizing the whole. Gen. Grey, with the light infantry and some other troops, advanced by night on the left to surprize the enemy on that side, and a detachment was made from Knyphausen's corps on the right, which having passed the North River, intended so to have enclosed the whole American force employed in watching them, as that few or none of them should have escaped. Some deserters from the column on the right prevented the completion of the scheme. These having at the most critical moment roused the militia who lay at New Taapan under gen. Wynd, afforded them the opportunity of escaping. But Grey conducted his division with such silence and order, that they not only cut off a sergeant's patrol of twelve men without noise, but completely surrounded Old Taapan without any discovery, and surprised Baylor's horse asleep and naked in the barns where they lay. A severe execution took place, and numbers were dispatched with the bayonet. The men being so completely surprised, and incapable of resistance, the refusal of quarter when implored, has led congress to deem the execution a massacre, after receiving

Sept.
27.

ceiving the best information upon oath, that they could obtain concerning it. Of about a dozen wounded soldiers who appeared to give evidence, three had received from nine to eleven stabs each, of bayonets, in the breast, back and trunk of the body, beside several wounds in other parts. Two others had received, the one five, and the other six stabs in the body. However the admiration of some, who reason from the nature of the weapon and the manner in which it is used, may be excited at these men being able in about three weeks time to give their testimony, as also being seemingly in a fair way of recovery; yet the positive evidence given upon oath before gov. Livingston, whose penetration would have detected, and whose integrity would have discarded a false witness, will be credited by impartial persons. Baylor himself was wounded, but not dangerously; he lost in killed, wounded and taken, 67 privates out of 104, beside 70 horses. It is said, that Grey ordered no quarter to be given, and that the charges were drawn, and the flints taken out; but that one of the light infantry captains ventured to disobey the order, and gave quarter to the whole fourth troop, which serves to account for the number of prisoners taken and carried to New York, viz. 39 privates, beside a captain, two subalterns, a volunteer, and the surgeon's mate.

Captain Ferguson of the 70th regiment, with about 300 land forces, were detached on the expedition to Little Egg harbour, under a proper convoy. They arrived off the bar on the evening of the 5th of October. The Americans had obtained some intelligence of the design, and had suddenly sent out to sea, such of their privates as were in any degree of readiness, to escape the

1778. impending danger. The larger of the remaining vessels, chiefly prizes, were hauled up the river to Chesnut-neck about twenty miles from its mouth. The smaller privateers and craft of different sizes, were carried still further up into the country. The detachment proceeded to Chesnut-neck, burnt the vessels found there, and destroyed the settlements, storehouses and works of every sort, to prevent all privateers being fitted out from thence for the future. On their return they made excursions into the neighbouring country, destroyed some considerable salt works, as well as the houses and settlements of several persons, who had taken a conspicuously active part on the side of America, or had been concerned in the fitting out of privateers.

When the troops had rejoined the Squadron, a French captain with some privates, who had deserted from count Pulaski's legion, gave such an account of the careless manner in which three troops of horse and as many companies of infantry were cantoned, at only a few miles distance, that the commanding officers by sea and land concluded on an expedition to beat up their quarters. They had the advantage of conveying the troops by water to within a small distance of their destination; the deserters also informed them of an un-guarded bridge, the possession of which would serve in case of necessity, effectually to cover their retreat back to the vessels. Two hundred and fifty men were embarked, who after rowing ten miles, landed long before day light within a mile of the bridge, which they secured; and leaving a guard in possession of it, the remainder pushed on and completely surprised Pulaski's light infantry, and destroyed about 50 of them, among whom was the baron de Bole and

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lieutenant de la Borderie. The attack being in the night, 1778. little quarter could be given; more would probably have been granted, had not the deserters falsely reported, that Pulaski had issued public orders forbidding his corps to grant any quarter to the British troops. The slaughter would not have ended so soon, if Pulaski had not on the first alarm hastened with his cavalry to support the infantry, which then kept a good countenance. The British not long after made a hasty retreat, and returned to their boats.

Let me pass from hence to relate a disagreeable disturbance that happened in Charlestown, South Carolina, on the night of September the 6th. By some means a quarrel commenced on shore between the American and French sailors, when the former made use of indecent, illiberal, and national reflections against the latter, which provoked resentment. The parties soon proceeded to open hostilities, when the French were driven from the town, and betook themselves to their shipping, whence they fired with cannon and small arms, which was returned by the Americans from the adjoining wharfs and shore. Several lives were lost, and many were wounded. The inhabitants were much alarmed, and the militia were obliged to be under arms a great part of the night. Proper measures were afterward taken to prevent a repetition of the like disorders; and both the president and assembly expressed their deep concern, that the slightest animosities should prevail between any citizen of America, and the subjects of their illustrious and good ally. Sept. 6.

In the evening of the 8th, there was a violent affray 8. at Boston between certain unknown persons and a num-

1778. ber of French. It is said, though not proved, to have been begun by seamen captured in British vessels, and some of Burgoyne's army, who had enlisted in privateers just ready to sail. A body of these fellows, we have been told, demanded bread of the French bakers employed for the supplying of the count d'Estaing's fleet; and being refused, fell upon and beat them in a most outrageous manner. Two of the count's officers attempting to compose the fray were wounded, the chevalier de Saint Sauveur so badly, that he died. on the 15th; and the next day the Massachusetts house of assembly resolved to erect a monumental stone to his memory. None of the offending persons having been discovered, notwithstanding the reward that was offered, it may be feared that Americans were concerned in the riot; while political prudence charged it upon others, that less umbrage might be taken at the event. The count was much grieved at what had happened; but had too much calmness and good sense to charge it upon the body of the inhabitants, who were no less concerned at it than himself; so that it created no dissensions between them. On the 22d, the general court received the compliments of the count and his officers; all of whom were invited to dine, three days after, at a public dinner. The fleet had been so far repaired, and so well secured by formidable works on George's island, in which the count had mounted near a hundred heavy cannon, that they could with the utmost propriety be absent upon the occasion. For the greater security, the general court, under an apprehension that the British fleet and army might move to the northward with a view of destroying the count's fleet, and repossessing themselves of Boston, had resolved

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on the 19th to raise a third of the militia. Three days before this resolve, admiral Byron arrived at New York from Halifax. His squadron had suffered so in their voyage from Britain, that it was a full month before he could sail again, in order to observe d'Estaing's motions. The count lay at ease and in safety; and on the 26th of October, entertained a large company of gentlemen and ladies, whom he had invited to dine with him on board the Languedoc. The entertainment was highly elegant. A full length picture of gen. Washington, presented to the count by Mr. Hancock, was placed in the centre of the upper side of the room, and the frame of it was covered with laurels. The count having made this public return for the personal civilities he had received from numbers, secured himself from all liableness to detention by points of honor: from a threatened detention of another nature, he had been happily relieved in season. It was generally expected from the scarceness of provisions of all sorts at Boston and the neighbourhood, that he would have encountered great difficulties, if not actual distress. The impracticability of victualling his fleet at that port was dreaded, even the subsisting of it was doubted. But he was freed from these apprehensions by a singular fortune. The New England cruizers took such a number of provision vessels on their way from Europe to New York, as not only supplied the wants of the French, but furnished an overplus sufficient to reduce the rates of the markets at Boston. This seasonable supply occasioned great triumph among the inhabitants. The count being in hope of sailing within a few days, published a declaration to be spread among the French Canadians, and addressed

Oct,
28.

1778 them in the name of their ancient master the French king. The design of it was to recall their affection to the ancient government, and to revive all the national attachments of that people, thereby to prepare them for an invasion either from France or America, and to raise their expectation of no distant change of masters. Adm. Byron having repaired his fleet, appeared off Boston bay; but had not cruised there long before he was overtaken by a violent storm, in which the ships again suffered so much, that they were glad to get into shelter at Rhode Island. The Somerset of 64 guns not being able to clear Cape Codd, run ashore and fell into the hands of the Bay-men, who saved her guns, and many valuable articles. When the storm ended, the wind settled in the north-west, and blew fair for carrying the French fleet to the West Indies. Count d'Estaing seized the opportunity, and sailed from Boston with his ships, though roughly repaired, clean and well victualled, and with his forces in full health and vigour. The behaviour of the French officers and sailors, the whole time that their fleet lay in port, was remarkably good, far beyond any thing of the kind ever before, when several men of war were present. The count made a point of alway lying on board at night. The officers conducted with the greatest regularity and decorum; but noticed a certain coolness in the gentlemen and ladies toward them, which was imputed to the want of so cordial an affection for France as what they had once entertained for Great Britain, and had not wholly laid aside; but it was greatly owing to the successful expedition against Rhode Island, and to what had been related concerning them respecting that affair. The

common sailors were peaceably inclined; and engaged in no quarrels, excepting what has been related, and one at night of October the 5th, in no wise material; and in neither of these do they appear to have been the aggressors. They neither abused, nor injured the townspeople; nor made themselves a nuisance by their excesses and disorderly conduct. An opportunity at length offers for mentioning some detached articles.

The Raleigh frigate, capt. John Barry, sailed from Boston the 25th of September, and was taken on the 29th, after bravely engaging for some time, and then being run on an island with a view to escape falling into the hands of two British men of war.

The Pigot British schooner of eight twelve pounders and forty-five men, lying near Howland's ferry on the eastern side of Rhode Island, a plan was laid for taking her. Major Talbot, with a number of troops, sailed on the 25th of October from Providence on board a small vessel. It was not till the 28th at night, that he ran down through Howland's ferry; when drifting after that under bare poles, for fear that the fort on Rhode Island should fire upon him and alarm the Pigot, he passed on undiscovered; and at half past one in the morning of the 29th got sight of the schooner. When but at a small distance from her, she hailed him; and receiving no satisfactory answer, her marines fired upon him from her quarter deck. He reserved his fire till he had run his jibb boom through her fore starboards, when he fired some cannon and threw in such a volley of musketry, loaded with bullets and buck shot, that the men on deck immediately ran below begging for quarters, and they that were below never made their appearance on deck.

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1778. The consequence was, his men ran out upon the jibb boom and boarded her, without the loss of a man. The captain of the Pigot behaved with the greatest resolution, and defended his vessel in his shirt and drawers for some time, without a single soul of his crew to assist him. Major Talbot's gunnel was eight feet lower than the nettings of the schooner. He carried her off with him, and ran to Stonington. Congress, as a reward of his merit, and for the encouragement of a spirit of enterprise, have presented him with the commission of lieutenant colonel.

The Massachusetts general court passed an act in their first session to prevent the return to this state of certain persons therein named, and others who have left the state, or either of the United States, and joined the British. There are above 300 named in it. In case they return they are to be taken up and secured, till they can be transported to some place within the British dominions, or in the possession of the British forces. Should they return after transportation, without liberty first obtained from the general court, they are to suffer death. Among the persons thus interdicted, it is to be supposed there are many whose greatest crime is that of having left the country, and preferred Britain for their place of residence, that so they might be exempted from the ravages and terrors of war.

The state of Virginia has passed an act for sequestering British property, and enabling those indebted to British subjects to pay off such debts by placing the money for the discharge of the same in the loan office of the commonwealth.

General

General Gates arrived at Boston, having been directed forthwith to repair thither and take the command of the continental forces in the eastern district. 1778. Nov. 5.

The present narrative of American matters shall close with part of a letter*, written from Philadelphia the 27th of August, by a gentleman of eminence to gov. Houston of Georgia—"Were I to unfold to you, Sir, the scenes of venality, speculation and fraud, which I have discovered, the disclosure would astonish you: nor would you, Sir, be less astonished were I, by a detail which the occasion would require, to prove to you, that he must be a pitiful rogue who, when detected or suspected, meets not with powerful advocates among those, who, in the present corrupt time, ought to exert all their powers in defence and support of these friend-plundered, much injured, and, I was almost going to say, sinking states. Don't apprehend, Sir, that I colour too high, or that any part of these intimations are the effect of rash judgment or despondency: I am warranted to say they are not: my opinion, my sentiments, are supported every day by the declaration of individuals: the difficulty lies in bringing men collectively to attack with vigor a proper object."

* This was a private letter; but was afterward published in Rivington's Royal Gazette, as written by the president of congress, Henry Laurens esq. It was known by several to contain a strong mark of authenticity—the truth.

LETTER VI.

Roxbury, April 14, 1779.

1778. **T**HE present letter shall begin with an expedition
 Oct. through the remote and upper parts of Pennsylv-
 1. ania, on the 1st of October under col. William Butler. It was directed not only against the Indians, but several considerable settlements belonging to the Tories, become particularly obnoxious from the violence of their past hostilities. The party, which consisted of a Pennsylvania regiment, covered by riflemen and rangers, took its departure from Schoharie, and having gained the head of the Delaware, marched down the river for two days; from whence turning off to the right, they struck across the mountains to the Susquehanna, which was the scene of action. They totally burnt and destroyed, both the Indian castles and villages in that quarter, and the other settlements; but the inhabitants, both Tories and Indians, escaped. The destruction was extended for several miles on both sides the Susquehanna. The difficulties, distresses and dangers which the party encountered, required no small share of that fortitude and hardiness of body and mind, which can scarcely be acquired by any considerable number of men without long habitude, under certain marked circumstances of situation. They were obliged to carry six days provision on their backs; and thus loaded, continually to wade through rivers and creeks, scarcely passable without any encumbrance to

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men unused to such service. In these circumstances, after the toil of a hard march, they were obliged to endure chilly nights and heavy rains, without any mean for keeping even their arms dry. But these were small matters compared with the danger awaiting their return, and which they hardly escaped. This was the sudden risings of the creeks and the Susquehanna, occasioned by continual heavy rains, while they were still in the enemy's country, and with their provisions nearly expended. The last circumstance rendered their case desperate, so that though, on any other occasion, the crossing of the Susquehanna, when so high, would have been deemed impracticable, it was successfully attempted by mounting the men on horses, which in some places were obliged to swim; and thus all the troops were safely transported, and by crossing the mountains evaded two other dangerous places. They returned to Schoharie on the 16th, after having, with the greatest fortitude, surmounted every difficulty, and were, by order of the colonel, complimented with the firing of thirteen rounds of cannon, and a feu de joie. 16.

Mr. governor Morris having acquainted congress, that he had received application from a person in New York, to know whether he may, with safety to his person and property, continue in that city upon the evacuation thereof; and having further informed them, that the said person is in a capacity to give useful intelligence, and probably will do it, if he receive assurances that it will be recommended to the state of New York to afford him protection, they resolved, that the said G. Morris be empowered to give him such assurances, on condition that he shall give intelligence of whatever may come to his 24.
his

1778. his knowledge relating to the numbers, movements and designs of the enemy. Henry Laurens esq; having
 Oct. filled the station of president for one year on the 31st
 31. of October, made his resignation of the presidency, left any example taken from his continuance might hereafter become inconvenient. He was replaced by a unanimous vote.

Accounts have been received, that commodore Evans, being dispatched by adm. Montague, arrived on the 14th of September in St. Peter's road, and sent to the governor of the small islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, acquainting him that the French had committed hostilities in America, and that therefore he demanded a surrender of the islands: which was complied with, as there was no force to make an effectual resistance. The governor and his suite, and the principal inhabitants, women and children, amounting to 932, were embarked on board the vessels found at St. Pierre's, and sent to France.

The French alliance has proved the occasion of the British ministry's having ordered away a considerable part of their force from New York. The same day that
 Nov. count d'Estaing sailed from Boston, commodore Hotham
 3. with two 64 gun ships, and three of 50, beside frigates and a bomb ketch, having under convoy transports containing 5000 British troops, commanded by gen. Grant, left Sandy Hook and steered for the West Indies, whither the count went.

The chevalier de Maduit du Plessis, lieut. col. of artillery in the continental army, having expressed an apprehension that the war is near a conclusion in this
 5. country, and a desire of returning to France to offer his

his service to his prince, congress ordered that a written testimonial of the high sense they entertained of his zeal, bravery and good conduct, should be given him. The committee upon the business, had resolved that a brevet commission of colonel should be granted him, which the congress negatived two days before, as it was high time to cease lavishing away promotions on foreigners. The ambition of the natives of France and of foreigners in common was unbounded; and the singular instances of rank which had been conferred upon them, in too many instances, occasioned general dissatisfaction and complaint. Fewer promotions in the foreign line would have been productive of more harmony among the continental officers. It is certain, that the army has a full proportion of foreign officers in their councils.

Some hundreds of Indians, a large number of tories, 11. and about 50 regulars, all under col. Butler, entered Cherry-Valley within New York state, by an old Indian path, which col. Alden, who commanded the American troops there stationed had neglected. The colonel was shot in attempting to reach the fort, called after him Alden: on which the enemy commenced a heavy fire that lasted more than three hours, when they withdrew, having no further hope of carrying it. The next day they left the place after having killed, scalped, and barbarously murdered 32 inhabitants, chiefly women and children, beside col. Alden and ten soldiers. They took prisoners the lieut. colonel, two or three other officers, 13 privates, and a number of inhabitants. The greatest inhumanities were practised on most of the dead.

John Roberts and Abraham Carlisle, of the quaker 22. persuasion, were executed at Philadelphia, being convicted

1778. victed of high treason against the commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The unaccountable operations of the war have been the occasion of a woful mistake in the general politics of that denomination. Encouraged by the reasonable prospect, that coercive measures properly planned and conducted would prove successful, the body of the American quakers have sided with the ministry, in hope of establishing their civil power in the state. They have disowned several worthy members for being active in the cause of their country; but not others for opposing it. Instead of maintaining a strict neutrality in the present contest, their partiality has been such, that the British officers have extolled their alacrity as spies, guides and informers. They have suppressed letters of Dr. Fothergill upon the impropriety of their conduct, and because they were written decidedly in favor of liberty. Let it be remembered however, that there are many deserving individuals among them; beside gens. Greene and Mifflin, who by a uniform steady perseverance in measures friendly to the American cause, have justly conciliated the esteem of their countrymen.

Nov. 27. General Washington gave orders that no small parties should by any mean be permitted to go upon Long Island. Under pretence of procuring intelligence, they became mere plundering parties, and carried off clothes, linens, ribbons, cases of knives and forks, wine glasses, and whatever they could lay their hands upon, which they brought back and sold publicly, making at the same time a distinction in the sale between hard money and paper. They pretended that the articles were the property of Tories, new-levy officers, &c. which, if true, their conduct was unpardonable, as it was not the business

of

of their incursions. Their rapacity made no discrimination between the inhabitants, many of whom, although obliged to remain on the island, were well affected to the American cause. 1778.

The plan for reducing Canada was transmitted by congress to gen. Washington, with a request, that he would make observations upon it. He communicated the same to them in a letter of November 11th; which being referred to a committee, they reported on the 5th of December, that the reasons assigned by the general against the expedition to Canada appeared to be well founded, and to merit the approbation of congress. After that, a committee was appointed to confer with the commander in chief on the operations of the next campaign: he therefore repaired to Philadelphia on the 22d. Dec. 22. After the conference the committee reported, "That the plan proposed by congress for the emancipation of Canada, in co-operation with an armament from France, was the principal subject of the conference:—That impressed with the strong sense of the injury and disgrace which must attend an infraction of the proposed stipulation on the part of these states, your committee have taken a general review of our finances, of the circumstances of the army, of the magazines, &c. &c.—That upon the most mature deliberation, your committee cannot find room for a well-grounded presumption, that these states will be able to perform their part of the proposed stipulation:—That nothing less than the highest probability of success could justify congress in making the proposition—Your committee are therefore of opinion, that the negotiation in question should be deferred till circumstances shall render the co-operation of these

1778. states more certain, practicable and effectual:—That the minister of these states at the court of Versailles, the minister of France in Philadelphia, and the marquis de la Fayette, be respectively informed, that the operations of the next campaign must depend upon such a variety of contingencies, that time alone can mature and point out the plan which ought to be pursued:—That congress therefore cannot decide on the practicability of their co-operating the next campaign in an enterprise for the emancipation of Canada.” The report was accepted, and the Canada expedition laid aside after a full consideration of all circumstances. But it is to be supposed, that there were circumstances beside what appear in the report, which wrought strongly in the minds of some shrewd members of congress. Such might dread the introduction of a large body of French troops into Canada, and the putting of them into the possession of the capital of that province, attached to them by the ties of blood, habits, manners, language, religion, and former connection of government. They might argue—“France under the idea of 5000 troops, may introduce twice the number, and having entered Quebec, may declare an intention of holding Canada as a pledge and surety for the debts due from the United States. Canada would be a solid acquisition to France on all accounts; and no nation is to be trusted further than it is bound by its interest. Canada would be too great a temptation to be resisted by any power actuated by the common maxims of national policy. France with that in her possession, may have it in her power to give laws to the United States: these will have less to fear from its remaining in the hands of the British.” The committee subjoined

to their report a draught of a letter to the marquis de la Fayette, which was also accepted. Gen. Washington forwarded it to Boston, where the marquis lay waiting for the determination of congress. It was accompanied with one from the general, expressing a concern for his having been so delayed. Upon the receipt of them, the marquis embarked on board the Alliance frigate, Jan. 7, 1779. 1778.
Dec.
29.

The campaign in the northern states having yielded no advantage to the British, and the winter being the proper season for southern expeditions, Sir Henry Clinton concluded upon turning his arms against Georgia. He might propose to himself the reduction of all the southern states, and be strongly inclined to it, by reason that these states produced the most valuable commodities in the European market, and carried on a considerable export trade, which seemed little otherwise affected by the war, than as it suffered by the British cruisers: beside, their rice was devoted to the service of his enemies, while it was wanted for the support of his sovereign's fleet and army in America. A plan of operation was concerted with gen. Prevost, who commanded in East Florida; and it was intended, that Georgia should be invaded both on the north and south side at the same time.

While the preparations for this conjunct expedition were carrying on, two armed bodies, consisting of regulars and refugees, made a sudden and rapid incursion into Georgia from East-Florida. One of them came in boats through the inland navigation, and the other marched over land by the way of the river Alatamaha. The first demanded the surrender of Sunbury; but on receiving from lieut. col. Mackintosh the laconic refusal

1778.—*come and take it*—they left the place. The latter pursued their march toward Savannah. Gen. Screven, with about a hundred militia, repeatedly skirmished with the party in their advance through the country. In one of these engagements he received a wound from a musket ball, and fell from his horse, when several of the British came up and discharged their pieces at him. He died of his wounds much regretted for his private virtues, and public exertions in behalf of his country. The invaders pursued their march till within three miles of Ogeechee ferry, where Mr. Savage with his own slaves, had erected a breast work to prevent their passing. Col. Elbert, with about 200 continentals, took post in the works, and prepared to dispute the passage of the river. These obstacles, together with information that the other party had failed in their design upon Sunbury, determined them to retreat without attempting to cross. On their return, they laid waste the country for miles, burnt St. John's church, a number of houses, and all the rice and other grain within their reach, and also carried off all the negroes, horses, cattle and plate, they could remove either by land or water. When this desolating mode of carrying on war was complained of by the American officer to the British, the latter positively disclaimed any order or even approbation of such proceedings, but mentioned that the people under the immediate command of the former had given a precedent. The party rage which wrought on each side, led both into those cruelties, at which humanity shudders.

The expedition against Georgia was committed to col. Campbell, who had been taken in Boston bay after gen. Howe had evacuated the town. The force appointed

pointed to act under him, consisted of the 71st regiment^{1778.} of foot, two battalions of Hessians, four of provincials, and a detachment of the royal artillery. The transports with the troops, amounting to full 2500, sailed from Nov. Sandy Hook, being escorted by a small squadron under^{27.} commodore Hyde Parker. The fleet arrived at the isle of Tybee near the mouth of the Savannah; and six days^{Dec.} after, the troops effected a landing. From the landing-^{29.} place a narrow causeway of six hundred yards in length, with a ditch on each side, led through a rice swamp. This causeway, had it been in a proper state of defence, might have effectually resisted a vast superiority of force; but the small party under capt. Smith, which was posted at it to impede the passage of the British, was too inconsiderable to check their progress. They pushed on with such vigor, that the Americans were almost instantly dispersed. The continental army, on which the defence of Georgia chiefly rested, had lately returned from a fruitless summer's expedition against East Florida, in which they had suffered so great a diminution, that joined with those present of the state militia, the whole made but about 820 men. Gen. Robert Howe, who commanded the Americans, had taken his station on the main road between the landing-place and Savannah, with the river on his left, and a swamp in front, extending beyond his right flank. The British advanced till within a few hundred yards of the American army, when Campbell manœuvred so as to cherish an opinion, that he meant to attack their left. For that purpose he ordered the first battalion of the 71st to form on the right of the road, thereby to impress a full idea of his designing to extend his front in that quarter. At the

1778. same time a considerable part of the royal army was detached to cross the swamp so high up as to get in the rear of the Americans. Chance had thrown into the hands of Campbell a negro, who knew a private path through the swamp, by which he promised to lead the troops without observation or difficulty. At length the British commander, presuming that the detachment had got effectually round upon the rear of the Americans, suddenly advanced, and Howe ordered an immediate retreat. A few minutes delay would have made it impossible, and it was then only practicable in the face, and under the fire of that part of the British army which had effected its passage through the swamp. A small body of about a hundred Georgia militia had been previously posted in the rear of the barracks near Savannah, which made some opposition to the British as they were issuing from the swamp, but was soon compelled to retreat, and its commander col. Walton was wounded and taken prisoner. The Americans retreated with precipitation and in disorder. The British pursued with spirit and rapidity. No victory was ever more complete. Thirty-eight officers, and 415 non-commissioned and privates, 48 pieces of cannon, 23 mortars, the fort with its ammunition and stores, the shipping in the river, a large quantity of provisions, with the capital of Georgia, were all in the space of a few hours in the possession of the conquerors. The British pursued the Americans through the town of Savannah. In the impetuosity of the pursuit, some of the inhabitants who had not been in the action, were bayoneted in the streets, several were killed or wounded in their flight; and a large number, finding their escape imprac-

impracticable without swimming a deep watery swamp, 1778. were obliged to sue for quarters. The Americans saved three field pieces out of four; but many lost their arms. That part of the army which escaped retreated up the river Savannah to Zubly's ferry, and crossed over into South Carolina *.

No place in similar circumstances suffered less by depredation, than Savannah did upon this occasion. A strong circumstantial testimony, that those enormities so frequently attributed to the licentiousness of the soldiers, should with much more justice be charged to the indefensible conduct of their superiors; whether by a previous relaxation of discipline, an immediate participation in the guilt, or a no less culpable sufferance of the enormity. About the time that the embarkation took place at New York, gen. Prevost marched from East Florida into the southern parts of Georgia. The royal troops, in traversing the desert that separates the one from the other, were obliged to live for several days on oysters. After encountering many difficulties, they heard of col. Campbell's arrival and success. They at length appeared before and surrounded the town and fort of Sunbury. The garrison consisting of about 200 men, made a show of defence, and gave the general the trouble of opening trenches; but all hope of relief being cut off by the fall of the capital, they surrendered at discretion. The general marched to Savannah, and took the command of the combined forces from New York and St. Augustine, and consequently of Georgia. Previous to his arrival, a proclamation had been issued to encourage the

* Dr. Ramsay's History of the Revolution in South Carolina, vol. i. p. 1—6.

1778. inhabitants to come in, and submit to the conquerors, with promises of protection on condition, that "with their arms they would support royal government." Numbers submitted, but the determined republicans fled up into the western parts of the country, or into South Carolina.

The attention of congress and the public has been much engaged about Mr. Silas Deane since his return from France. You will recollect what has been written relative to his recall—p. 38. Congress in August desired him, to give from his memory, a general account of his whole transactions in France, from the time of his first arrival, as well as a particular state of the funds of congress, and the commercial transactions in Europe, especially with Mr. Beaumarchais. They appear not to have been thoroughly satisfied; and to have had apprehensions lest there had been a misapplication of the public money. Mr. Deane seems not to have relished his situation; but to have been desirous of changing it by returning to France, or exciting a general resentment against congress. He had not yet accounted for his expenditure of public money; and had *carefully* left his papers and vouchers behind him, though he had the opportunity of d'Estaing's fleet to procure them a safe transportation to America. On the 30th of November he addressed a letter to congress, signifying his intentions of returning to France, and pressing to have his affairs brought to some conclusion. December the 1st congress resolved, "that after to-morrow they will meet two hours at least each evening, Saturdays excepted, beginning at six o'clock, until the present state of their foreign affairs be fully considered." On the fourth Mr. Deane wrote again to them, acquaint-

acquainting them of his having received their notification of the resolve, and expressed his thanks; and yet on the day following he published in the news papers, *An address to the free and virtuous citizens of America*, dated November, but without any day of the month. The address threw the public into a convulsion, and made them jealously uneasy: for it expressed a necessity of appealing to them, and communicating that information against which their representatives had shut their ears;—declared or insinuated that their public servants, Messrs. Arthur and William Lee, were deficient in abilities, application and fidelity, and were universally disgusting to the French nation;—intimated a design to lead them into a breach of their national faith and honor, solemnly pledged to their ally;—reflected upon the integrity of some leading members in congress;—and strongly hinted at further important information to be brought forward if there should be occasion. Mr. Deane by publishing his address on the Saturday, secured the advantage of the Sunday for its being more universally read in the city and neighbourhood, while fresh from the press, than it would otherwise have been. In the morning of the day when it appeared, and before congress (as must be supposed) were acquainted with its contents, they assigned Monday evening for *bearing* him, and ordered his being notified to attend. The intervening space gave the members an opportunity of perusing it, so that when they met on Monday evening at six o'clock, they resolved, “That Silas Deane esq; report to congress in *writing*, as soon as may be, his agency of their affairs in Europe, together with any intelligence respecting their foreign affairs which he may judge proper:—
That

1778. That Mr. Deane be informed, that if he hath any thing to communicate to congress in the interim, of *immediate importance*, he shall be heard to-morrow evening at six o'clock." Mr. Deane attending was called in, and the foregoing resolutions were read. Thus were the ears of congress opened to him: but their good disposition was not improved for the communication of that wondrous information which he had threatened to give in his address. The conduct of Mr. Deane in his address to the public, was the subject of debate in congress; many members were for having no more concern with him at present, but for leaving him to the public as he had appealed to them, till he had done with them and they with him. They judged that the honor of congress bound them to this measure: but others apprehended that discontents would arise from a supposed inattention, and were therefore inclined to a different line of conduct. This division of sentiment on what might be supposed the honor of the house, occasioned Mr. Laurens, who adhered to the former opinion, to resign the chair, on Dec. 9. the 9th of December. The next day John Jay esq; was elected president.

Such was the clamor rapidly raised, and the torture occasioned through the United States, by Mr. Deane's publication, that Mr. Payne, under the former signature of *Common Sense*, endeavoured to allay them in an address to him. This led on to further publications pro and con, in which Mr. Payne made a conspicuous figure, and had great advantage, from being secretary to the committee of congress for foreign affairs. They have brought to light several important secrets, and particularly the following—The commissioners, Messrs. Frank-

lin, Arthur Lee and Deane, in their joint letter of February 16, 1778, say, "We hear Mr. Beaumarchais has sent over a person to demand a large sum of money of you on account of arms, ammunition, &c. We think it will be best for you to leave that matter to be settled here (in France) as there is a mixture of public and private which you cannot so well develop." [Though Mr. Deane was privy to Mr. Francey's coming, and had even by letter recommended the business he came upon, yet in this joint letter he appears to know no more of the matter than the other two.]—In the spring of 1776, a subscription was raised in France to send a present to America of two hundred thousand pounds sterling, in money, arms and ammunition. All that the suppliers wanted to know was, through what channel it should be remitted, and Mr. Beaumarchais was fixed upon as their agent. [If this subscription had not the pecuniary support, it undoubtedly had the countenance, of the crown, for the despotic police of France would otherwise have immediately crushed it.] Mr. Beaumarchais appears to have been employed by the subscribers, to offer the supplies purchased by their money as a present to America, and a contract was made for the freightage of them: they were sent in the *Amphitrite*, *Seine* and *Mercury*, two years ago.—The duplicates of the dispatches of October 6 and 7, 1777, which should have arrived by capt. Folger, but who had received blank papers in their stead, were brought over with the treaty of alliance by Mr. Simeon Deane. These show, that had the dispatches arrived safely, congress would have had a clew to guide them, in settling with Mr. Francey as Mr. Beaumarchais' agent, and have escaped paying for the present.

Beside

1778. Beside the general information communicated by the three commissioners in their joint letter of October the 7th, Mr. Arthur Lee in his single one of the preceding day, gave a circumstantial account in what manner the present was first offered, and declared—"That for the money and military stores already given, no remittance will ever be required." The duplicates arrived a month too late, congress having on the 8th of April settled the business on which Mr. Francey was sent.—While the packets for congress and col. R. H. Lee containing the before-mentioned two letters were filled up with blank white paper, a large handsome packet directed to Mr. Hancock, president when the dispatches were written, beside one to Mr. Robert Morris, and another to Mr. Silas Deane's brother Barnaby, came in perfect safety by capt. Folger.

Many are now very suspicious, that the parties who possessed themselves of the missing dispatches, had a knowledge of their contents; and that Mr. Deane is capable of informing the public who they were, and what advantages they were to enjoy from Mr. Francey's success through the loss of the dispatches and the non-arrival of the duplicates in season. The public at large, and their representatives in congress, were much divided by the publications relating to Mr. Deane. The army in general sided with him. Their attachment was increased by his declaring—"I am fully confident, that every intrigue and cabal formed against our illustrious commander in chief, will prove as ineffectual as those against Dr. Franklin." This declaration brought forward to public view, part of Mr. Deane's letter to the foreign committee, dated Paris, December 6, 1776—

"I

"I submit the thought to you, whether if you could ¹⁷⁷⁸ engage a great general of the highest character in Europe, such for instance as prince Ferdinand, or Mr (archbal) B (roglio), or others of equal rank to take the lead of your armies, such a step would not be politic, as it would give a character and credit to your military, and strike perhaps a greater terror into our enemies. I only suggest the thoughts, and leave you to confer with baron (Kalbe) on the subject at large."

Mr. Gerard was so alarmed at the publications of Mr. ¹⁷⁷⁹ Payne, that he presented a memorial to congress upon ^{Jan.} the occasion, by which they were led into the consideration of them. Various motions were made respecting the secretary; among the rest one for hearing him the next day, which being negatived, and the negative communicated to him, he wrote on the 8th a letter to congress, by which he resigned his office of secretary to the committee of foreign affairs. Two days after, the French minister sent a second memorial; and on the 12th ^{12.} congress "resolved unanimously, that the president be directed to assure the said minister, that the congress do fully, in the clearest and most explicit manner, disavow the publications referred to in the said memorials; and as they are convinced by indisputable evidence, that the supplies shipped in the Amphitrite, Seine and Mercury, were not a present, and that his most Christian majesty, the great and generous ally of these United States, did not preface his alliance with any supplies whatever sent to America, so they have not authorized the writer of the said publications to make any such assertions as are contained therein, but on the contrary do highly disapprove of the same." They were indeed

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1779 convinced, by the indisputable evidence of having been charged with, and drawn in to make themselves debtors for the supplies, that they were not a present: but had the dispatches been received, or the duplicates in time, so that they could have known that they were originally intended for a present, and that no remittance for them would ever be required, that invincible evidence would have been wanting. Had their generous ally really pre-faced his alliance with any supplies, it would have been undoubtedly in such a guarded way, as to have admitted of a negative, whenever the same became politically necessary. For the further satisfaction of Mr. Gerard, the congress "resolved unanimously, That as neither France or these United States may of right, so these United States will not conclude either truce or peace with the common enemy, without the formal consent of their ally first obtained, and that any matters or things which may be insinuated or asserted to the contrary thereof, tend to the injury and dishonor of the said states."

Jan.
14.

Instead of proceeding further in the account of congressional acts and resolves, let me here relate certain articles of intelligence that have been necessarily omitted.

The confederation has been ratified by all the states excepting Maryland. On the 5th of December congress resolved, "That the sentence of the general court martial upon general Lee be carried into execution." All but New York and the Delaware counties were represented. Four voted in the affirmative, two in the negative, the other five were not sufficiently united to vote either way. It is probable, that a regard to gen. Washington, and an apprehension that if the sentence was

not

not confirmed he might resign, produced a confirmation. But the genuine patriotism of the commander in chief, would have prevented his declining to serve his country, while his exertions were acceptable; had the resolve been different. In that case, no censure could have fallen upon him, it would have been only declaring, that upon a close attention to the evidence contained in the trial, with a copy of which every member was furnished, congress thought the court martial mistaken.

Wednesday the 30th of December was observed by order of congress as a thanksgiving day. At this very period, the affairs of the United States were in a most distressed, ruinous and deplorable condition. Idleness, dissipation and extravagance, seemed to have laid fast hold of the generality; and speculation, speculation, and an insatiable thirst for riches, to have gotten the better of every other consideration and almost of every order of men. Party disputes and personal quarrels were the great business of the day, while the momentous concerns of the empire, a great and accumulated debt, ruined finances, depreciated money, and want of credit (which in the consequences is the want of every thing) were but secondary considerations, and postponed by congress from time to time, as if their affairs wore the most promising aspect. The paper was sinking in Philadelphia daily 50 per cent. and yet an assembly, a concert, a dinner or supper (which cost two or three hundred pounds) did not only take men off from acting, but even from thinking of this business. Some of the most disinterested and patriotic Americans felt more real distress on account of this appearance of things, than they had done at any one time since the commencement of the dispute.

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1779.
Jan.
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Congress resolved, that as many counterfeits had appeared in circulation of various denominations of the emission of May 20, 1777, and April 11, 1778, the whole emissions of these two dates, should be taken out of circulation. They were to be received within a limited term for continental debts and taxes, and into the continental loan offices, either to loan or be exchanged at the election of the owners. The counterfeiting of the bills, according to my information, originated with either James or John Rankin, formerly of York county in Pennsylvania. Having quitted their farms and joined the royalists, that government confiscated their estates: one of them, to compensate for his losses and avenge himself upon the United States, entered upon the business of counterfeiting their paper currency, which was afterward practised by others.

The convention troops were sent off in the second week of November to Virginia: the Germans marched from Cambridge, the British from Rutland, in which town they had been quartered for some time back. But as the people could not banish from their minds, the notions they had imbibed of the cruelties the American prisoners had received, and as some were afraid of being plundered, and others of being killed, the troops while upon their march met with great incivility from all ranks and degrees of men. The militia guard, which escorted gen. Reidesfel's baggage from Hartford to the York line, broke open some of the boxes and plundered them of several dozen of wine, a great number of spermaceti candles, and five dozen packs of cards. The general was so much displeased with their conduct, that he wrote a letter to gen. M'Dougall, who returned a

very

very polite answer, and furnished a guard of continental troops to escort the baggage to Suffex court-house in the Jerseys.

Mr. Gerard presented memorials to congress, the subject of which they determined to take into immediate consideration, at the same time informing him, that if he wished to communicate any thing further, they would receive the same from him in a private audience. He having a wish to make further communication, attended on the 15th, when congress was resolved into a committee of the whole. The committee reported, on the 23d, "That upon the consideration of all the matters referred, they are of opinion, that his Catholic majesty is disposed to enter into an alliance with the United States of America; that he hath manifested this disposition in a decisive declaration lately made to the court of Great Britain; that in consequence of such declaration, the independence of these United States must be finally acknowledged by Great Britain, and immediately thereon a negotiation for peace will be set on foot between the powers of France, Great Britain, and these United States, under the mediation of his Catholic majesty; or that Spain will take part in the war, and his Catholic majesty will unite his force with the most Christian king and the United States:—That in order to be in readiness for a negotiation, the ministers of the United States ought to be instructed by congress on the several following particulars, viz. 1. What to insist upon as the ultimatum of these states: 2. What to yield or require on terms of mutual exchange and compensation." The committee reported their opinion upon these points,

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1779 which were afterward the subjects of consideration in congress.

Mr. Gerard manifested a desire, that the war might not be prolonged by too high and unreasonable demands; and that the United States would bring their ultimatum as low as possible. He strongly recommended moderation. The fate of war was uncertain; and he hinted that a decisive naval engagement in favor of the British, might give a great turn to their affairs. Mr. S. Adams was for insisting upon the cession of Canada and Nova Scotia; and some were for adding Florida. Congress
 Mar. 19. agreed, 1st, What should be the bounds of the Thirteen United States in the ultimatum: 2d, That every port and place within the United States, and every island, harbour and road to them, or any of them belonging, should be absolutely evacuated by the land and sea forces of his Britannic majesty, and yielded to the powers of the state to which they respectively belong. The fishery is a point which the New Englanders are much set upon having secured, and which will occasion repeated debates, and be long before it is fully and finally determined.

The Parisian minister, Monsieur Vergennes, does not confine his policy to the establishment of American independence; it aims at securing to the French the Newfoundland fishery to the exclusion of the United States, and to the Spaniards the sole navigation of the Mississippi, and the lands on the eastern side of it, at the back of the present settlements of the United States, and therefore called the Western lands. You must use this information as a clew to guide you through the labyrinth of Mr. Gerard's negotiation. Nine days after he had
 his

his audience of congress, they received the account of 1779, the king of Naples having opened his ports to the flag of the United States of America.

The stroke aimed at gen. Mifflin by the congress resolve of June 11, 1778, (see p. 12.) having answered its intention, all further proceedings ceased; on which the general, on the 17th of August, sent a letter to congress enclosing his commission, which for reasons therein set forth, he begged leave to resign. That and two more letters of an earlier date were referred to a committee of three, who reported on the 23d of January 1779, that it did not appear to them that any proceedings had taken place since the resolve of June the 11th, and that if the said resolution was to be carried into execution, it should be done in the usual manner, and that gen. Washington should have directions accordingly. Still the matter rested, so that Mifflin on the 25th of February, informed congress that he had not heard what was their pleasure as to his resignation, and requested of them afresh to accept it, which they then resolved to do. Thus he has been impelled to lay aside his military character, which for the liberties of his country he had assumed, though of the quaker denomination: but he retains his patriotism, and will continue a volunteer in the service of the public. He resumed the quarter master general's department in September 1776 (then vacant through a resignation) by the desire and order of congress, and not for any private view or emoluments of his own, so that he did not consider himself as responsible for the calamitous effects of any delay, which depended not on himself or his associates, but on congress.

Let us resume our account of military operations.

1778. The South Carolina delegates, rather with a view to conquest, than from any special apprehension of danger to their own or neighbouring state, from the troops under Sir Henry Clinton, requested the congress to appoint gen. Lincoln (on whose character they justly reposed great confidence) to the command of all their forces to the southward: accordingly they made the appointment on the 25th of September, and ordered him to repair immediately to Charlestown. When he took his leave of them in October, they had in contemplation the reduction of East Florida, and put into his hands a scheme for effecting it, with the observations of two gentlemen on the strength of St. Augustine. The first hint of a destination of British troops for Georgia appears to have been given to the commander in chief by a letter of the 9th of October, from a confidential correspondent at New York. It was the 4th of December before the general arrived at Charlestown. The North Carolina state, on the first intelligence of an intended embarkation from New York for the southward, generously raised about 2000 militia to serve for five months; put them under the command of gens. Ashe and Rutherford, and sent them forward without delay. They came on with such dispatch, that had they not been detained ten days near Charlestown, to be furnished with arms, they would have been in time to have joined gen. Howe before the reduction of Savannah. South Carolina had not a sufficient stock of public arms for the militia of both states, and suspended the distribution of them, till it became certain whether South Carolina or Georgia was the object of the British armament; which could not be determined while it was in the offing. On the morning
of

of the 26th, two regiments of 150 men each from 1779 Charlestown, with the levies and militia from North Carolina, amounting to about 950, marched for Georgia: they made their first junction with the American army after their retreat over the Savannah.

January the 3d, gen. Lincoln established his head Jan. quarters at Purysburgh, about 30 miles from the mouth 3. of the Savannah. He met with a sore disappointment. He had been encouraged to expect a force consisting of 7000 men, beside the militia of South Carolina and Georgia, whereas he had only 1400 in the whole. He was also led to believe, that he should meet with great plenty of supplies and military stores, instead of which there were no field pieces, arms, tents, camp utensils or lead, and but very little powder; in short, hardly any article in the arsenal or quarter-master's store, all occasioned by the want of a military chest. A large proportion of the South Carolina militia was draughted, and marched under gen. Richardson for head quarters. But they behaved very badly, refused to submit to the articles of war for the government of the continentals, and left the camp and even their posts at pleasure with impunity; as gen. Lincoln had no hold of them, their own state law only imposing a fine, instead of putting them upon the same footing congress had ordered for all the militia when in pay of the continent and acting with the regular troops. When ordered on command, and implicit obedience was expected, they would ask at times—"Whither are we going? And how long are we to stay?" By the 24th of January most of them had left the camp. Their defection however was in some measure repaired by the arrival at length of gen. Ashe

1779. near head quarters, on the 31st, with about 1100 men, which addition made the number of rank and file under Lincoln 2428, beside 367 on command.

While the greatest part of the American force consisted of such ungovernable militia, gen. Prevost joined col. Campbell with 700 regular troops from St. Augustine. With this increase of numbers he wished to establish a post in South Carolina, and detached 200 men to take possession of Port-Royal island. Soon after Feb. they landed, gen. Moultrie, at the head of an equal
3. number, in which there were only nine regular soldiers, attacked and drove them off. This advantage was principally gained by two field pieces, well served by a party of the Charlestown militia artillery. The British lost almost all their officers; and several prisoners were taken. The Americans had a lieutenant and seven privates killed, and 22 wounded. This success checked the British, and for the present prevented any enterprise against South Carolina; but they extended themselves over a great part of Georgia, and established two posts, one at Ebenezer, and the other at Augusta. The last place being high up in the country, was a good position for awing the western inhabitants, and a convenient rendezvous for the royalists. Here the British endeavoured to strengthen themselves by the addition of South Carolina Tories. They employed emissaries to encourage them to a general insurrection, and assured them, that if they would cross the Savannah, and add their force to that of the king's army at Augusta, they would have such a decided superiority, as would effectually crush their enemies, and make a speedy return to their homes practicable on their own terms. The army consisted

fisted of about 2000 regulars and royalists under col. 1779.
Campbell. Several hundreds of the Carolina Tories collected, embodied under the denomination of loyalists, and marched along the western frontiers of South Carolina. They had such numbers of the most infamous characters among them, that their general complexion was that of a plundering banditti, more solicitous for booty than the honor and interest of their royal master. As they marched, they appropriated to their own use every kind of property they could carry off. Col. Pickins upon intelligence of their progress and rapine, collected the whig militia of the district of Ninety Six. He left a guard at the Cherokee ford to impede their crossing the Savannah, while he went upon some other service; during his absence they made good their passage. He immediately followed them with about 300 men; came up with and engaged them about three 14.
quarters of an hour, when they gave way and were totally routed. They had 40 killed, including their leader col. Boyd, who had been secretly employed by the British to collect and head them. Pickins had nine killed and several wounded. By this action the Tories were dispersed all over the country. Some ran to North Carolina. Many returned home, and cast themselves upon the mercy of their state government. Being the subjects of South Carolina, they were tried in a regular manner, and 70 were condemned to die; but sentence was executed only on 5 principals, and the rest were pardoned.

The British having extended their posts up the river, gen. Lincoln fixed encampments at Black Swamp, and nearly opposite to Augusta on the north side. With a view

1779. of strengthening the last, and improving any advantages which might offer for crossing the river, and limiting the British to the sea coast of Georgia, gen. Ashe was ordered to the upper parts of the country. He began his march on the 10th, with 1500 North Carolina militia, and the remains of the Georgia continentals; and on the 13th in the evening reached gen. Williamson's camp opposite Augusta. That same night col. Campbell made so hasty a retreat from Augusta, that by eight the next morning he had marched 14 miles lower down. This precipitate movement was owing to some false intelligence respecting either Ashe's force, or the arrival of a large body of continentals at Charlestown; which Campbell credited, and from whence he inferred the necessity of an immediate retreat to prevent his being cut off. Lincoln finding that he had quitted Augusta, Feb. 16. wrote to Ashe, that it was of the greatest importance, that if the enemy was out of the upper part of the country, he should follow them down as fast as possible, lest by a forced march they should join their own troops below, attempt his post, and drive him from it, before he (Ashe) could come up with their rear. Lincoln on the 22d sent him the following intimation—"I think that Briar Creek will be a good stand for you, until some plan of co-operation be digested, for which purpose, as soon as you arrive there, I will meet you at the Two Sisters, you appointing the time." Ashe crossed the Savannah with about 1200 troops, beside 200 light horse. On Saturday morning the 27th, the army arrived at the lower bridge on Briar Creek. The next day gens. Brian and Elbert took possession of a proper spot of ground at twelve o'clock and encamped, Ashe being gone to meet

meet Lincoln. On March the 2d, the officer of the 1779.
day reported, that reconnoitring parties of the enemy's
horse and foot had been seen within their picquets the
night preceding. Ashe returned the evening of the 2d Mar.
to camp. On Wednesday the 3d, nothing was in for- 3.
wardness for repairing the bridge which Campbell had
destroyed in his return downward, though it had been
reported five days before, that the repair would take up
but six hours. About two in the afternoon, informa-
tion was given, that one of their soldiers had six balls
shot through his body; little or no notice was taken of
it. Within an hour after, an account was brought, that
500 British regulars were at the ferry. At half past four
a few of the American horsemen returned from skir-
mishing with the enemy, when orders were issued for the
troops to be formed into platoons from the right, and
composed into a column: it was not long before the
British light infantry appeared. Lieut. col. Prevost, after
a circuitous march of about 50 miles, in which he crossed
Briar Creek 15 miles above Ashe's encampment, came
unexpectedly on his rear with a detachment of about 900
men, including some horse. Upon the appearance of
the British light infantry, Ashe said to Elbert, who com-
manded the continentals—"Sir, you had better advance
and engage them." They did not exceed 100 rank and
file, but upon Elbert's ordering them, they formed, ad-
vanced thirty yards in front of the enemy, and com-
menced a very sharp fire on them, which continued
about fifteen minutes. Ashe and the North Carolina
militia remained about 100 yards in the rear entirely in-
active. Instead of advancing to support the continen-
tals, they were struck with such a panic at being so com-
pletely

1779. pletely surpris'd, that they went to the right about, and fled in confusion without discharging a single musket. The few Georgia regulars finding themselves thus deserted, and being surrounded by a great part of the enemy, broke and endeavoured also to escape. Elbert did every thing to rally them but in vain. He and the survivors of his brave corps were made prisoners. About 150 Americans were killed, and 162 were captured. None had any chance of escaping but by crossing the river, in attempting which many were drowned: of those who got over safe, a great part returned home, and never more rejoined the American camp; the number that joined it, did not exceed 450 men. This event deprived gen. Lincoln of one fourth of his number, secured to the British the possession of Georgia, and opened a communication between them, the Indians, and the Tories of South and North Carolina.

Toward the end of the last year, an American camp was formed at Danbury, the sufferings it underwent you may collect from the following passage in the letter of a field officer of January 23d.—“ We were not under cover till the beginning of the present year. It was distressing to see our officers and men in tents in such severe cold weather. Added to which, and the former list of grievances, was the want of provisions. From six to nine days were our men frequently without bread. A revolt took place in general Huntington's brigade: 400 men got under arms, and marched off the ground to an advantageous post, where they expected to have been joined by the men of the other two brigades; but by the alacrity of the officers and gen. Putnam's influence, they were dispersed.”

An expedition has been agreed on against the inimical 1779-
Indians of the six nations. The command of it is to
be intrusted with gen. Sullivan. The plan is to divide
the force into three parts. The principal consisting of
about 3000 is to go by the way of Susquehanna. Another
of about 1000 is to enter the Indian country by the
Mohawk river; and the other of about 500 is to attack
by the Ohio and Allegahany rivers. Gen. Washington
is endeavouring, by appearances of an expedition to
Canada, to induce the British governor to keep his force
at home; and with a view to it, beside jealousies which
have been excited on the side of lake Champlain, he is
trying to create others by the way of Coos. A con-
siderable number of Americans was employed the last
year in cutting a road from thence toward Canada.
Col. Hazen is now gone with his regiment to extend
the road toward the Sorel, and give the appearance of
an intention to invade the province by that passage. The
American army are better clad and more healthy than
they have ever been since the formation of the army.

The procuring of early and good intelligence is of the
highest importance to the American commander in
chief. He has therefore directed one of his confidential
correspondents to reside at New York, to mix with and
put on the airs of a tory, thereby to cover his real cha-
racter and avoid suspicion. He has hinted to him an
intimacy with some well informed refugee. Members
of congress are not trusted with the names of such cor-
respondents, concerning whom the strictest honor, and
the profoundest secrecy, is observed, and every precau-
tion taken to prevent a discovery by unforeseen acci-
dents. They are furnished with two chymical liquids,

or

1779. or sympathetic inks, the one for writing, and the other for rendering what is written visible; the former of that nature as not to become visible by any mean whatever, but by having the latter rubbed over it.

The king's speech on opening the session of parliament, has been circulated through the United States more than a month ago. The popular leaders have been diverting themselves with it. They triumph at observing, that it is replete with complaints of the unexampled and unprovoked hostility of the court of France—that while the professions of neutral powers are represented as friendly, their armaments are mentioned as suspicious—and that there is a total silence with regard to the American war.

A number of loyal refugees had petitioned, and been permitted by Sir Henry Clinton to embody under proper officers, and to retaliate and make reprisals upon the Americans declared to be in actual rebellion against their sovereign. A party of them, who had formerly belonged to the Massachusetts, made an attempt upon Falmouth in Barnstable county, but were repulsed by the militia. They renewed it, but not succeeding, went off to Nantucket, and landed 200 men, entered the town, broke open warehouses, and carried off large quantities of oil, whalebone, molasses, sugar, coffee, and every thing that fell in their way. They also carried off two brigs, loaded for the West Indies, two or three schooners, and a large number of boats. In a proclamation they left behind, they took notice of their having been imprisoned, compelled to abandon their dwellings, friends and connections, had their estates sequestered, and been themselves formally banished, never to return on pain

April
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of

of death. Thus circumstanced, they conceived them-^{1778.}

selves warranted, by the laws of God and man, to wage war against their persecutors; and to use every mean in their power to obtain compensation for their sufferings.

The news of the French king's declaration of war, published at Martinico in the middle of last August, but signed at Versailles the 28th of June, and the capture of Dominica by the French, reached the continent as early as could be expected. By the accounts that are given, the British government had been at an unusual expence in fortifying that island, and the works had been lately covered with a numerous artillery, sent from Britain for the purpose. But though there were 160 pieces of cannon and 20 mortars, the regular troops who composed the garrison amounted only to about a hundred. Neither the importance nor the weakness of Dominica, escaped the attention of the marquis de Bouille, governor general of the French windward islands, whose residence was at Martinico. He therefore landed on the island with about 2000 men, under cover of some frigates and privateers, about day break of last September the 7th, and proceeded to attack the different batteries and forts by land, as his marine force did by sea. The handful of regulars, with the militia and inhabitants in general, did all that could be expected, but defence was fruitless, so that the lieutenant governor Stuart, to save the inhabitants from plunder and ruin, entered into a capitulation, which was soon concluded. The terms were the most moderate that could be conceived; the marquis, out of his great humanity, having nearly agreed, without discussion or reserve, to every condition proposed in favor of the people, whose only change was that of sovereignty.

1779. **vereyghty.** The smallest disorder or pillage was not permitted; and the marquis, in lieu of plunder, rewarded the soldiers and volunteers with a considerable gratuity in ready money. His stay was short: he left a garrison of 1500 men behind him, who with the strength of the works, and the powerful artillery in their hands, will be able to defend Dominica effectually. We are in expectation of hearing soon of count d'Estaing's operations.

An embargo having been laid in the southern states on the exportation of grain and flour to these eastern ones, occasioned a scarcity of bread at Boston. What from drought the last summer, a blight on the rye, the neglect of tillage by the husbandman's being called off to the army, and divers other causes, the inhabitants of the farming towns could not afford a sufficient supply to the sea-ports. These have fitted out a number of cruisers, which in some instances have procured a temporary relief; but "the trade and harbours upon the Massachusetts sea coasts have been left in such an unguarded and defenceless situation, that where the Bay-men have taken one vessel from the enemy, their small privateers out of New York have taken ten from them*." The last month the Bostonians were in great distress for want of flour: but the other day a cargo of it happily arrived from Baltimore. The Massachusetts's house of assembly, judging it absolutely necessary that so the army might be kept together, have engaged to make good the wages of the officers and soldiers raised in this state, at the close of the contest, provided it is not done by congress.

April
12.

* The Massachusetts council.

L E T T E R VII.

Rotterdam, May 14, 1779.

FRIEND G.

THE present letter shall begin with what was a chief¹⁷⁷⁸ subject in the former—our British admiral Keppel. When he returned to Plymouth, he experienced the benefit arising from temperate conduct. Unanimity prevailed among the officers, and every exertion was made in refitting the ships: so that he sailed on his second cruise the 24th of August, and kept the sea as long as the approaching winter could admit. The French fleet left Brest a week before; but steered to the southward, and amused themselves about Cape Finisterre; thus their own coasts and the bay were abandoned to the British, who were in vain endeavouring to obtain intelligence of them. The French commerce now became a prey to the British cruisers, in a degree which few former wars had equalled for the time, while the trade of Britain arrived in a state of security, scarcely exceeded by that of peace.

The reception which adm. Keppel met with on his return from sea, both at court and at the admiralty, equalled his most sanguine expectations. An attempt however was made on his character from an unexpected quarter. Sir Hugh Palliser, on the 9th of December, preferred to the lords of the admiralty articles of accusation against him, for offences supposed to have been committed

1778. committed on the 27th of the preceding July, after having withheld them near five months. A few hours after the charges were laid, the admiralty, without further inquiry, sent him notice to prepare for his trial. Sir Hugh mentioning in the house of commons, his having demanded a court martial on adm. Keppel, had the mortification to hear his conduct in so doing, and also in publishing, a month before, in the newspaper, a vindication of his own behaviour on the 27th of July, openly and without reserve condemned by every gentleman, of whatever side or party, who spoke on the occasion. The admiral's trial commenced at Portsmouth

1779. on the 7th of January. He gave notice to the admiralty, that he might find it useful to his defence to produce his instructions. The admiralty communicated to him his majesty's pleasure, and informed him, that they could not consent that the same should be laid before his council, or be produced at the court martial. Being willing to run any hazard for the benefit of the state, he neither produced them to his council, nor communicated their contents. His trial was not closed till the 11th of February; when the court acquitted him of every charge in the fullest, clearest, and to him most honorable terms; further declaring, that he had behaved as became a judicious, brave, and experienced officer. They marked the conduct of his accuser in the body of the sentence, by declaring—"that the charge was malicious and ill-founded." The sentence was a matter of notoriety the next day at Westminster, when it was carried in the house of commons, with only one dissenting voice, "That the thanks of this house be given to admiral Augustus Keppel, &c. for his having
gloriously

gloriously upheld the honor of the British flag on the 27th and 28th of July." The thanks of the lords in nearly the same terms, were agreed to, four days after. Public and unusual rejoicings, in various and remote parts of the kingdom, succeeded the sentence. The illuminations in London and Westminster, were such as have scarcely been exceeded upon any occasion. Sir Hugh Palliser having become the object of general odium, resigned his seat at the admiralty board, his lieutenant generalship of the marines, and his government of Scarborough castle: he also vacated his seat in parliament, and only retained his vice-admiralship, as a qualification for his trial by a court martial, which was ordered to be held upon him. The same began on the 12th of April, and closed the 5th of May, the court having, *after two days deliberation*, agreed upon their sentence. They gave it as their opinion, that his conduct and behaviour on the 27th and 28th of July, were, in many respects, highly exemplary and meritorious: at the same time they could not help thinking it was incumbent upon him to have made known to his commander in chief the disabled state of his ship the *Formidable*. Notwithstanding his omission in that particular, the court were of opinion, that he was not, in any other respect, chargeable with misconduct or misbehaviour on those days, and therefore acquitted him.

Lord Shulldham and commodore Rowley sailed from Spithead, last December the 25th, with their respective squadrons, and a convoy of near 300 sail. His lordship returned after seeing the West India and New York fleets safe to the distance of 226 leagues from the Lizard; and the commodore proceeded on his voyage to rein-

1779. force admiral Byron. On the 8th of March, admiral Hughes, with six ships of the line under his command, having the East and West India fleets under convoy, sailed from St. Helens for the East Indies, accompanied by several other men of war, some in different services, and others to return after attending the merchantmen to a certain latitude.

The following accounts have been received from the West Indies.

1778. While the marquis de Bouille was engaged in reducing Dominica, admiral Barrington, with two ships of the line and some frigates, lay at Barbadoes, waiting merely for instructions which he had been ordered to expect at that place, and which were not yet arrived. It was the French declaration of war, published at Martinico, that first informed him of hostilities. The loss of two of Sir Peter Parker's frigates, taken by the French on the coast of Hispaniola, proved also the earliest mean of conveying intelligence to that admiral, as well as to the government of Jamaica, where he was stationed, that a war had actually commenced.

No sooner did adm. Barrington receive information of the invasion of Dominica, than he dispensed with the violation of his orders, and proceeded to its intended relief. He was too late, as the conquest was but the work of a day: his small squadron however, removed the panic which had spread through the neighbouring islands, and effectually curbed the further enterprises of the enemy.

Count d'Estaing sailed from Boston, and commodore Hotham with the troops under gen. Grant from Sandy Hook, each on the same day for the West Indies.

Both

Both fleets were equally involved in a gale of wind while ¹⁷⁷⁸ on their passage. The French were greatly dispersed, which probably saved the British convoy from the danger of encountering an unequal force, steering unknown to the commodore the like course with himself. The relative situation of the fleets was a secret to both commanders: but they were so near on the 28th of November, that a British brigantine with four horses, fell into the hands of d'Estaing. The commodore's fleet was the most numerous; but he had the skill and happiness of keeping them together during the gale, and of getting the start of the count, so as to arrive without any other loss than of the brig at Barbadoes, where he joined adm. Barrington on the 10th of December.

Dec.
10.

An expedition for the reduction of St. Lucie, was immediately undertaken without suffering the troops to land. Within two days they sailed for the island; and the reserve of the army, consisting of the 5th regiment, with the grenadiers and light infantry of the whole, under general Meadows, landed at the grand Cul de Sac on the 13th in the evening. That officer immediately ^{13.} pushed forward with his detachment, to the heights on the north side of the bay, which were occupied by the French commandant with the regular forces and militia. These posts he soon forced. While this was doing, gen. Prescott landed with five regiments, with which he guarded the environs of the bay, and pushed on advanced posts, so as to preserve a communication during the night with the reserve. When morning appeared, the reserve, supported by Prescott, advanced and took possession of the small capital of Morne Fortune. The chevalier de Micoud made what defence he was able,

1778. but was compelled, by the superiority of force, to retire from one post to another, as the British pressed forward. Prescott took possession of the batteries and posts in the rear of the reserve as they advanced. Meadows pushed forward under the heat of a burning sun, and possessed himself of the Vierge, which commanded the north side of the Carénage harbour; and Sir Henry Calder, with the four remaining battalions, guarded the landing-place, kept up the communication with the fleet, and sent detachments to occupy several posts on the mountains, which looked down upon and commanded the south side of the grand Cul de Sac.

The last French flag on those posts, which were in sight among the neighbouring hills, was scarcely struck, when count d'Estaing appeared in view of the fleet and army with a prodigious force. Beside his original squadron of twelve ships of the line, he was accompanied by a numerous fleet of frigates, privateers, and transports, with a land force estimated at 9000 men. The count intended the reduction of Barbadoes, the Grenades, and St. Vincents. In his way to the first, where he expected to have found Barrington with only two line of battle ships and a few frigates, he received intelligence of the attack on St. Lucie, which he might consider as a circumstance that seemed to throw the whole British force by sea and land, an easy prey into his hands. In all human probability, this must have been the inevitable event, had he arrived twenty-four hours sooner: but the day being far advanced, he deferred his operations till the ensuing morning. During the night, adm. Barrington exerted all his powers in getting the transports warped into the bottom of the bay, to be as remote

mote from danger as possible, and the ships of war¹⁷⁷⁸, brought into their respective stations, so as to form a line effectually to cover its entrance; which was still further secured by a battery on the southern, and another on the northern opposite points of land. His force consisted of a 74, a 70, two 64, and two 50 gun ships, Dec. beside three frigates. In the morning, the count stood¹⁵ in with his whole fleet for the Careenage, apprehending that the British had not possession of that part of the island. A well directed fire, which his own ship received from one of those batteries that had so lately changed masters, convinced him of his mistake, and made him bear away with his fleet and transports. He was apparently disconcerted and at a loss how to act; but after much hesitation, bore down with ten sail of the line upon the British squadron, just before noon. He met with so warm a reception from the ships and batteries, that after a while he drew off. About four o'clock, he made a fresh attack with twelve ships of the line; which was better supported and longer continued than the first. The French cannonade was concentrated within a narrower direction, and was heavier than before; but this effort was not more effectual than the former. The count's fleet fell into evident confusion, and retired from action with great loss. On the following day he plied to the windward, and anchored in the evening off Gros Islet, about two leagues to the northward. The night and the next morning he spent in landing his troops in Choc bay, between Gros Islet and the Careenage. The same time was employed by the British admiral in preparing for every possible future event.

1778. General Meadows with the reserve, was nearly shut up in the peninsula of the Viergie; for by his distance and situation, as well as the decided superiority of the enemy, he was totally cut off from the support of the main body, any further than what might be derived from those batteries commanding the land approaches to the Viergie, which that possessed. The good effect of those positions, which had been taken by the British on their first landing, became now apparent to both armies. The chagrin and disappointment of the French was great, when after landing they discovered that Sir H. Calder's brigade was in possession of the mountains on the south side of the grand Cul de Sac: for the bombarding of the British fleet from those heights was one great object they had in view; which, from the strong positions taken by that brigade, was unattainable without a general engagement by sea and land, the issue of which the French were not as yet for trying. They determined upon directing their first effort separately against Meadows. For

Dec. 18. this purpose, about 5000 of their best troops were drawn out, and advanced in three columns to attack the British lines, reaching across the Isthmus, which joins the Peninsula to the Continent. The right was led by count d'Estaing, the centre by Mr. Lovendahl, and the left by the marquis d'Bouille. The remainder of their troops were kept disengaged to watch the motions of Prescott's brigade, and to check any attempt to succour Meadows. On the near approach of the columns, they were enfiladed with great effect by the aforementioned batteries; however, they rushed on to the charge with great impetuosity, supported the conflict with much resolution, and suffered considerably before they were en-

tirely repulsed. As soon as they had recovered their^{1778.} breath and order, they renewed the attack with the same eagerness as before; and were encountered with the same determined resolution. Though they suffered severely in these two attacks, they again rallied, and returned to the charge the third time. The affair was now soon decided. They were totally broken, and obliged to retire in the utmost confusion, leaving their dead and wounded in the power of the victors. Gen. Meadows was wounded in the beginning of the action, but would not quit the field, nor have the assistance of the surgeons, till the matter was decided. The French while employing their troops by land, attempted a diversion by sea, which had so little effect as to deserve no further notice. Their loss was 400 killed upon the spot, 500 desperately wounded so as to be incapable of service, and 600 more slightly wounded; the whole amounting to a number considerably superior to those whom they had encountered.

Count d'Estaing continued ten days longer on the island without making further attempts, and then relinquished a contest which had only manifested the courage of the French, without yielding any profit. He embarked his troops on the night of the 28th, and on the following day abandoned the island to its destiny. He was not out of sight, when the chevalier de Micoud, with the principal inhabitants, offered to capitulate, and had favorable conditions granted them, which were signed on the 30th. Admiral Byron arrived off St. Lucie the 6th of January.

When the late law in favor of the English Roman^{1779.} Catholics was passed, a design was formed of extending

1779. it to Scotland, which was violently opposed. The opposition originated in Glasgow, the inhabitants of which are almost all on the side of administration in the American contest *. The general indignation against the design showed itself in the different riots that happened at Edinburgh and Glasgow in February. In the metropolis, an attack was made upon a new house, in which the principal popish clergyman or bishop, with four other families of the same persuasion dwelt, and in which a room was laid out for a chapel, about 34 feet long. The house was set on fire, and the flames continued until noon of the following day. The inhabitants with difficulty escaped alive. During the demolition of this "main pillar of popery," as it was called, a detachment from the main body of the people resorted to the old chapel. The house containing it was inhabited by several families (agreeable to custom, and the nature of many buildings in that city) whose property and effects, as well as the inside of the house and chapel, were totally destroyed, together with a considerable library belonging to the popish bishop. The rioters afterward directed their violence against the papists in other parts of the town, and totally destroyed the stock in trade and effects of two or three tradesmen of that profession. One or two ladies of fashion of that communion were obliged to take refuge in the castle. They at length concluded upon the punishment or destruction of those gentlemen, of whatever rank or religion, who had been supposed to favor the late design of obtaining a relaxation of the laws against papists. Their first fury was pointed against Dr. Robertson the celebrated historian,

* Dr. John Erskine's Considerations on the Spirit of Popery, p. 31. and

and to that of Mr. Crosbie an eminent advocate. The '779 mob found the houses of those gentlemen so well armed, and guarded with so determined a resolution by their numerous friends, that they proceeded not to extremities, but retired without any further outrage than the breaking of some windows. The magistrates did not exert themselves for the suppression of the riots, till the last day of the week. The conduct of the magistrates in Glasgow was widely different. The populace made their first and principal attack upon Mr. Bagnal, an English papist from Staffordshire, who had for several years established and conducted a considerable manufactory of stone ware. They burnt his house, totally destroyed all the works for carrying on his business, and obliged him and his family to fly to the fields for their lives. But the measures pursued by the magistrates and principal inhabitants soon restored order and security. Mr. Bagnal was also speedily acquainted, that he should be reimbursed for every part of his losses to the utmost farthing. Toward the end of March, the citizens of Edinburgh agreed to make full restitution to the sufferers in that city. Through this religious combustion, and the circumstances attending it, administration have lost that firm hold of the temper and disposition of the people in Scotland, which perhaps nothing else could have loosened.

The British cruisers seized and carried into port the Dutch vessels bound for France, when laden with either naval stores or supposed French property. The merchants, owners and insurers, complained to their high mightinesses, by whose order a memorial was presented to the British court, which was far from having the desired

1778. fired effect. The answer proposed the purchasing of the naval stores, the paying of the freight, and the indemnifying the proprietors; but expressed a determination to prevent, as much as possible, all naval and military stores being transported into the French ports, accompanied however with an assurance, that all possible regard for the rights of their high mightinesses should be exercised, and that the stipulations and spirit of the treaties between the king and their high mightinesses would be adhered to in the strongest manner *as far as it should be practicable*—of which the British court would be judges. The merchants of Dort, Rotterdam and Amsterdam, not being satisfied with the answer, petitioned their high mightinesses for redress against the British treatment of their flag, and the violences committed against their property. The States General concluded upon such measures as should meet the wishes of the petitioners, and determined upon an augmentation of the fleet for their protection. Sir Joseph Yorke after that, on the 22d of last November, proposed in a memorial by his sovereign's order, a conference with their high mightinesses upon what was most proper to be done respecting the articles of complaint. The States General declined the offer, and insisted upon the literal and strict observance of the treaty between them and Great Britain. The French king had in a regulation of the preceding July, concerning the navigation of neutral vessels, reserved to himself the power of revoking the advantages granted by the first article, in case the belligerent powers should not grant the like within the space of six months. The like not being granted on the part of Britain, the king ordered such revocation, with respect to the subjects of the

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the Dutch republic; but excepted the cities of Amster- 1779-
dam and Haerlem, because of their patriotic exertions
to persuade the republic to procure from the court of
London the security of unlimited liberty to their flag.
This measure was considered by that court, as designed
to cause the republic to quarrel with Great Britain, and
occasioned the presentment of a memorial by Sir Joseph April
Yorke, in the name of his sovereign, to the States Ge- 9-
neral; in which the literal and strict observance of the
treaty insisted upon by them is pronounced incompatible
with the security of Britain, and contrary to the spirit
and stipulations of all the future treaties between the
two nations. His majesty also declares in it, that he
cannot depart from the necessity he is under of exclud-
ing the transportation of naval stores to the ports of
France, and particularly timber, even if they are escorted
by men of war; but flatters himself, that he shall never
be obliged to take other measures toward the republic,
than those which friendship and good harmony may
dictate.

The capture of the Dutch vessels occasioned a great
dearth of naval stores at Brest, so that the repair of
count d'Orvilliers' fleet has been exceedingly hindered.
The Ville de Paris, which suffered much in the engage-
ment with admiral Keppel, will not be ready for sea,
much before the time for the fleet's sailing. Till April
there was not a mast fit for her in all Brest*. A num-
ber of store ships however got in from Holland, so that
about the beginning of the year, several small squadrons
were prepared and shipped out from different ports nearly
at the same time; one under Mr. de Grasse for Marti-

* Advocate M-I—': Political Memoirs,

1779. nico, to reinforce count d'Estaing. Another under the marquis de Vaudreuil, with a land force, sailed for Africa, and has taken the British forts, settlements, factories and property, at Senegal and other parts of that coast.

1778. The English East India company, foreseeing actual hostilities, resolved, very soon after the delivery of the French rescript, on a bold and decisive measure, for the final reduction of the French power in India, and conducted the business with unusual secrecy. Their instructions were happily conveyed with uncommon expedition, and preparations were immediately made for besieging Pondicherry. Gen. Munro invested the fortress closely on the 21st of last August, with an army of 10,500 men, including 1500 Europeans. But before this had taken place, there was a warm engagement between Sir Edward Vernon, with a small squadron, and Monsieur Tronjolly commanding the like, in which the French were so roughly handled, that to escape a second action they abandoned the garrison to their fate on the day Pondicherry was invested. The garrison amounted to near 3000 men, of which 900 were Europeans. They were commanded by Mr. de Bellecombe, who disputed every point of his ground, and persevering to the last extremity in a determined and noble defence, held out to the 16th of October. An honorable capitulation was allowed in testimony of the garrison's gallantry, and every requisition that did not interfere with the public benefit was agreed to. The factories at Chandernagor, Yaman and Karical, with the settlement at Masulipatam, had been reduced before the capitulation.

1779. The New York, Quebec, and Newfoundland fleets, May to the number of 300, under the convoy of adm. Arbuthnot,

buthnot, sailed from Spithead : the admiral, with a squadron of men of war and a number of transports, is bound to New York. 1779.

LETTER VIII.

Roxbury, Aug. 5, 1779.

THE disasters which followed the American arms, after the landing of the British in Georgia, roused the South Carolinians vigorously to oppose the extension of their conquests. By an almost unanimous voice, they chose John Rutledge esq; their governor; and to him and his council was delegated, by the legislature, power "to do every thing that appeared to him and them necessary for the public good." In execution of this trust, a body of militia were assembled, stationed at Orangeburgh near the centre of the state, and kept in constant readiness to march whithersoever the public service required. The governor sent orders to gen. Williamson, and directed him to push parties into Georgia, and destroy all the cattle, horses, provisions and carriages they should meet with in that state. Gen. Lincoln in a letter remarked upon the order, as affecting alike the innocent and guilty, the aged and infirm, &c. and concluded with saying—"As nothing but a conviction that it is an indispensable duty, would have led me to the disagreeable task of making the above remarks, so I shall

April
16.

1779. I shall avoid at present any other, however my own feelings may have been hurt." The order, if at all needful, should have gone from the continental general, whom congress had empowered to command in that department. He in a letter of the preceding day, wrote to the president of congress, "We have lately exchanged some prisoners, those who have come out are in a most miserable condition, few of them fit for service. Their treatment on board the prison ships, and the measures adopted to oblige them to renounce their allegiance to the United States, and engage them in the British service, have been cruel and unjustifiable, many insisted with them—many are dead—and others in a weak dying state."

April 19. A council of war was held at the general's head quarters at Black-swamp, when it was agreed—"That as the number of militia in camp, with those at gen. Williamson's camp, and 500 promised from Orangeburgh, and 700 from North Carolina now in the state, amounted to 5000 men; they would collect the remainder near to Augusta (after leaving 1000 here and at Purysburgh) and cross the Savannah, take some strong ground in Georgia, prevent the enemy's receiving supplies from the back parts of the country, circumscribe them within their narrow limits, and prevent their junction with the unfriendly and the savages, in Georgia and in the back parts of this state." The general began his march, leaving at Black-swamp and Purysburgh, the 5th and part of the 2d regiment of South Carolina, and about 800 militia under gen. Moultrie. When the American army was 150 miles up the Savannah, gen. Prevost availed himself of that moment, and crossed over to Purysburgh with

with 2400 men: he had beside a considerable body of 1779-
Indians. The first night after entering Carolina, he
made a forced march in hope of attacking Moultrie at
Black-swamp, but was three hours too late. The latter
had changed his quarters, and being joined by col. M^cIn-
toth's party, which had made a timely retreat from
Purysburgh, took post at Tulifinny bridge, to prevent
the further incursion of the British, and to keep between
them and Charlestown. Gen. Lincoln, on information
of these movements, immediately detached 300 chosen May
continental troops to reinforce Moultrie, lest he should
be mistaken in his idea, that Prevost only intended a
feint to divert him from his general plan; in pursuit of
which he crossed the Savannah near Augusta, and march-
ed for three days down the country toward the capital
of Georgia. But being informed by Moultrie's letters
of the 4th and 5th, that his number of men was greatly
diminished by the desertion of the militia, and that he
was obliged to retire before the enemy, Lincoln recrossed
the river and country, as fast as possible, to come up
with Prevost. Moultrie had no cavalry to check the
advancing foe; who met with scarce any other interrup-
tion in their march, than the destruction of all the bridges
by the retreating Americans. The absence of the main
army under Lincoln, the retreat of Moultrie, the plun-
dering and devastations of the invaders, and above all
the dread of the royal auxiliaries, the Indians, diffused
a general panic among the inhabitants, and induced
many to apply to the British for protection. The faci-
lity with which their army proceeded through the coun-
try, added to the repeated suggestions of the friends to
royal government, who positively assured Prevost, that
Charlef-

1779- Charlestown would certainly surrender at his approach, induced him to change his original plan, and push for the place. Had he designed it at first, and continued his march with the same rapidity he began it, he would probably have carried the town by a coup-de-main; but he halted two or three days, when advanced more than half the distance. In this interval the lieut. governor and the council made the greatest exertions to fortify it on the land side. All the houses in the suburbs were burnt. Lines and abatis were in a few days carried from Ashley to Cooper rivers. Cannon were mounted at proper intervals across the whole extent of Charlestown neck. The militia of the vicinity were summoned to the defence of the place; and they generally obeyed. Gen. Moultrie's retreating army, gov. Rutledge's militia from Orangeburgh, and the detachment of chosen continental troops under col. Harris, which marched near forty miles a day for four days successively, all reached Charlestown on the 9th and 10th of May.

May
10.

11. Nine hundred of the British army, their main body and baggage being left on the south side of Ashley river, crossed the ferry, and soon appeared before the town. The same day count Pulaski's legionary corps of infantry crossed Cooper river to Charlestown. They had scarcely arrived two hours, when he led 80 of them out of the lines, and stationed them in a valley behind a small breast work, with the view of drawing the British into an ambuscade. He advanced a mile beyond his infantry, and joined a party of regular horse, and mounted militia volunteers, and with that force engaged the British cavalry for a while, and then retreated to his infantry; who from an eagerness to engage had quitted their

their breast work, and so rendered abortive the advantage of the intended ambuscade, and were by superior numbers compelled to retreat. Pulaski however by discovering the greatest intrepidity, and by successful personal encounters with individuals of the British cavalry, had a considerable influence in dispelling the general panic, and in introducing military sentiments into the minds of the citizens. Major Huger, a distinguished officer, while commanding a party without the lines, was killed at night through mistake by his countrymen. That the town might not be carried by surprise or a sudden assault, tar-barrels were lighted up in front of the works. Its defence rested on the exertions of 3300 men, the greater part of whom were militia, wholly unacquainted with military operations. Gen. Lincoln was marching with all expedition for its relief, but his timely arrival was dubious, and the crisis extremely hazardous; a proposition was therefore made by the civil authority to gen. Prevost—"That South Carolina would remain in a state of neutrality, till the close of the war, and then follow the fate of its neighbours, on condition the royal army would withdraw." The British commander rejected this advantageous offer, alleging that he did not come in a legislative capacity; and insisted, "That as the garrison was in arms, they should surrender prisoners of war:" upon this they prepared for sustaining an immediate assault, but Prevost fearing the consequences, declined making it. Some days after, he took an express coming from Lincoln: upon reading it and discovering the movements and intentions of the latter, he cried out aloud, that he expected to be between two fires, and precipitately quitted his ground, recrossed

1779. Ashley river, and to avoid Lincoln's army, now in his rear, filed off from the main land to the islands on the sea coast. Both armies encamped within 30 miles of Charlestown, watching each other's motions till the 20th of June, when a part of the British army intrenched at Stono ferry was attacked. By a preconcerted plan, a feint was to have been made from James island with a body of militia from Charlestown, at the moment when gen. Lincoln began the attack from the main; but from mismanagement they did not reach their place of destination till several hours after the action.—The American army consisted of about 1200 men, only half continentals, who were posted on the left, while the North and South Carolina militia occupied the right. Col. Malmedy led a corps of light infantry on the right, and lieut. col. Henderson on the left. The Virginia militia and the cavalry formed a corps of reserve. The British force consisted of 6 or 700 men. They had redoubts, with a line of communication, and field pieces advantageously posted in the intervals, and the whole secured with an abatis. That they might be harassed, or lulled into security, they were alarmed by small parties, for several nights preceding the action. When the attack was made, two companies of the 71st regiment sallied out to support the picquets. Henderson ordered his light infantry to charge them, on which they instantly retreated; only nine of them got safe within their lines. All the men at the British field pieces, between their redoubts, were either killed or wounded. The attack was continued for an hour and twenty minutes, and the assailants had manifestly the advantage; but the appearance of a reinforcement, to prevent which the feint from
James

James island was intended, made a retreat necessary. 1779- The whole garrison sallied out on the Americans: their light troops however so effectually retarded the British, that they not only retreated with regularity, but brought off their wounded with safety. Lincoln lost in killed and wounded 146, beside 155 missing. This attack accelerated the retreat of the enemy, who with great assiduity and fatigue, passed over from island to island until they arrived at Beaufort, from whence they had an open and free communication with Georgia by water, whither most of them went, leaving a sufficient garrison under col. Maitland.

This incursion into South Carolina added much to the wealth of the officers, soldiers and followers of the camp, and still more to the distresses of the inhabitants. The negroes, allured with hopes of freedom, repaired in great numbers to the royal army; and to recommend themselves to their new masters, discovered where their owners had concealed their property. It is supposed, that the British carried out of the state about 3000 slaves, many of whom were shipped off and sold in the West Indies; but the inhabitants lost upward of 4000, each worth on an average about fifty-six pounds sterling. Several hundreds of them died of the camp fever; and numbers, laboring under diseases and afraid to return home, perished in the woods. The royal army also plundered the planters of several rice barrels full of plate. They spread over a considerable extent of country, and small parties visited every house, stripping it of whatever was most valuable, and rifling the inhabitants of their money, rings, jewels and other personal ornaments; and yet what was destroyed by the soldiers was supposed to

1779. be of more value than what they carried off. The devastations committed by them were so enormous, as that a particular relation of them would scarcely be credited by people at a distance, though the same could be attested by hundreds of eye-witnesses. It will be nearly as difficult to credit another species of depredation which certain Americans have committed upon gen. Washington's property. His debtors have been discharging in paper currency (at the rate of a shilling in the pound, through the depreciation) bonds, which ought to have been paid him, and would have been realized before he left Virginia, but for his indulgence. Seven thousand pounds sterling would not compensate the losses he might have avoided by remaining at home, and attending a little to his own concerns. Alas! what is virtue come to! What a miserable change has four years produced in the temper and disposition of many of the sons of America! It almost surpasses belief!

May
10. Sir Henry Clinton dispatched Sir George Collier and gen. Matthew, with about 2000 men beside 300 marines, to make a descent upon Virginia. They sailed for Portsmouth, and upon their arrival landed the troops at a distance; then marched and took immediate possession of the town, which was defenceless. The remains of Norfolk on the opposite side of the river fell of course into their hands. On the approach of the fleet and army the Americans burnt several vessels; others were saved and possessed by the British. The guards were pushed forward 18 miles by night to Suffolk, where they arrived by day light, and proceeded to destroy a magazine of provisions, together with the vessels and naval stores found there. A similar destruction was carried on at
Kemp's

Kemp's landing, Gosport, Tanner's Creek, and other 1779 places in that quarter; nor were the frigates and armed vessels less active or successful in their service. Within the fortnight that the fleet and army continued upon the coast, the loss of the Americans was prodigious. Above 130 vessels of all sorts, including some privateers and ships of force, were destroyed or taken by them; 17 prizes were brought away, beside 3000 hogsheads of tobacco, which fell into their possession at Portsmouth. Except the house of a widow and the church, they burnt every house in Suffolk; and all the principal houses of gentlemen in their route shared the same fate. The Virginia assembly resolved, "that the governor be required to remonstrate to the British commander against such a cruel and unprecedented manner of waging war, not authorized by any civilized nation:" but a sufficient military force to back it was wanting. The fleet and army, with their prizes and booty, arrived safe at New York before the expiration of the month. The troops 30 were joined to others going up the North river to attack the posts of Stoney-point and Verplank, where the Americans had begun to construct strong works, for keeping the lower communication open between the eastern and southern states. Gen. Vaughan landed with the greater part on the east side; while the remainder, accompanied by Sir H. Clinton, advanced further up, landed on the west side, and took possession of Stoney-point without opposition. Directly opposite, the Americans had completely finished a strong fort, which was defended by four pieces of artillery, and a garrison of about 70 men. But it was commanded by Stoney-point; to the summit of whose rocks cannon and mortars were

1779. dragged up during the night. By five in the morning, a battery was opened, which poured a storm of fire over on the fort; while Vaughan with his division, making a long circuit through the hills, arrived, and closely invested it by land. The garrison finding themselves totally overpowered, surrendered prisoners of war. Sir H. Clinton moving his main body up the North River, occasioned the American army's moving from their encampment at Middle Brook toward West-point, for which they were in no small apprehension, the garrison being few, and the fort not completed. Sir H. Clinton gave immediate direction for perfecting the works of both posts, and particularly for putting Stoney-point in the strongest state of defence: for their better support, and with a view to further operations, he encamped his army at Phillipsburgh, about half way down the river to New York island. By the loss of these posts, the Jersey people were obliged to make a circuit of about 90 miles through the mountains, to communicate with the states east of Hudson's river.

We must here suspend our account of the operations under the direction of Sir Henry, and attend to very different expeditions.

One was ordered to be set on foot by lieut. governor Hamilton of Detroit, who was to be joined in the spring of this year by 200 Indians from Mechilimainoi, and 500 Cherokees and Chickasaws, and other nations: these were to penetrate up the Ohio to Fort Pitt, sweeping Kentucky on their way, having light brass cannon for the purpose. He was to be joined by all the Indians that could be procured; and had no doubt of forcing all West Augusta. Destruction from every quarter seemed

seemed to hover over the Virginia back settlers. Col. 1779. Clarke hearing that Hamilton (who had taken post at St. Vincent on the 15th of last December, and had fortified the same to be ready for, and favor the expedition) had weakened himself by sending away his Indians against the frontiers, formed the desperate resolution of attacking him, as the only probable expedient for saving the country. After many difficulties he arrived unexpectedly to the enemy, and made an assault. Feb. 23. The town immediately surrendered, and assisted in the siege of the fort. The next day Hamilton in the evening, agreed to surrender the garrison prisoners of war, in all 79, with considerable stores. Clarke had marched across the country with only 130 men, being all he could raise. He was 16 days on his route, through the inclemency of the season, drowned lands, &c. While engaged with Hamilton, an Indian party, who had been to war, returned, knowing nothing of him and his men; Clarke sent a number to give them battle, took nine of them, and released two prisoners. Hearing of a convoy of provisions and goods on their way from Detroit, he detached a party of 60 men in armed boats, which met them before they got intelligence of their danger 40 leagues up the river, and made a prize of the whole, taking 40 prisoners, and about 10,000l. worth of goods and provisions. By Clarke's attacking Hamilton, the intended expedition of the enemy was ruined. The colonel, on his return, transmitted to the Virginia council, letters and papers relating to lieut. gov. Hamilton, Philip Dejoin, justice of peace for Detroit, and William Lamothe, capt. of volunteers, whom he had made prisoners of war in the Illinois country.

1779.
June
16. The board proceeded to consider them; and found, that Hamilton had incited the Indians to perpetrate their accustomed cruelties on the citizens of the United States — had at the time of his captivity, sent considerable detachments of Indians against the frontiers, and had actually appointed a great council of them to meet him, and concert the operations of the present campaign — and that he gave standing rewards for scalps. It also appeared to them, that Dejain was, on all occasions, the willing and cordial instrument of Hamilton; and that Lamothe was a captain of the volunteer scalping parties of Indians and whites. They therefore resolved to advise the governor, that they should be put in irons, confined in the dungeon of the public jail, debarred the use of pen, ink and paper, and excluded all converse, except with their keeper, being considered as fit subjects on which to begin the work of retaliation. The governor gave orders accordingly.

April
19. Colonel Goose Van Schaick marched from Fort Schuyler toward Onondaga on Lake Ontario, which he destroyed with a large quantity of grain, cattle, horses, arms and ammunition, except such as he could conveniently bring off. Twelve Indians, mostly warriors, were killed, and 34 made prisoners, the rest fled to the woods. This expedition was performed in about five days and a half, (the distance going and returning 180 miles) and without the loss of a single man.

The British generals were divided upon the subject, whether or no to carry on a predatory war against the Americans. They sent home, and submitted it to the ministry, who determined in favor of waste and rapine. After which, Mr. Arthur Lee forwarded to gov. Trumbull

bull and to the committee for foreign affairs, letters 1779-dated Paris, April 6, 1779, mentioning—"I have received intelligence, that it is just determined in the British cabinet, to send over immediate orders to New York for an expedition through the Sound up Connecticut river. The enemy are to land at Weathersfield, and proceed by land to New Haven bay, where they are to embark, after having plundered, burnt and destroyed all in their way." A member of the committee wrote to his correspondent, on the 16th of July, "Arthur Lee had intelligence, on the 6th of April, of the design upon Fairfield, but contrary winds and captures of his originals, have prevented our getting seasonable warning." Sir H. Clinton having received the ministerial instructions, proceeded in conformity to the spirit of them, only varying circumstances so far as that required. Sir George Collier, with the necessary ships of war and transports, and gov. Tryon at the head of 2600 land forces, seconded by gen. Garth, were appointed to the predatory expedition. While in the Sound, the commanders joined in an address to the inhabitants of Connecticut, which they signed on the 4th of July. In that they invited and urged them to return to their duty and allegiance; and promised all, remaining peaceably in their usual place of residence, protection in person and property, excepting the civil and military officers of the government; but threatened those who slighted the warning. The address was merely farcical, for instead of *leaving them to consult each other upon the invitation*, as they stated it, they employed force before the people had time to consult each other after the invitation was received.

The

1779.

July

5.

The troops were landed early on Monday morning, those under Tryon at East-Haven, and those under Garth at West-Haven. The last marched for New-Haven, which they entered between twelve and one, after being much harassed and galled on their way by the militia, and others who joined them. The town was delivered up to promiscuous plunder, a few instances of protection excepted. Whigs and tories, indiscriminately though not universally, had their money, plate, rings and other articles taken from them; and much of their furniture, which could not be carried off, was wantonly destroyed—all the West India goods and provisions were served the same. In such scenes of confusion, individuals could not escape personal abuse. The militia were collecting in such a manner, and the soldiers had got so disordered by liquor, that the next morning the troops made a sudden retreat, without tarrying either to execute the original design of burning the town, or even to fire a single house in it. When they had provided for their own safety, they ventured to burn some stores on the long wharf. At East-Haven, where Tryon commanded in person, several dwelling houses were burnt, the cattle also were wantonly killed in the adjoining fields. By the afternoon, the militia became so numerous, and crowded so close upon him, that he retreated on board the fleet, which in the evening sailed for Fairfield. There the troops landed about three o'clock on Wednesday afternoon. As they anchored off the town in the morning the militia had some little time for collecting. Gov. Tryon sent by a flag to col. Whiting, who commanded them, the address; and gave him an hour's time to consider, and to answer so as to save the town. The

July

7.

colonel

colonel replied in behalf of the Connecticut inhabitants, 1779.

"The flames have now preceded their answer to your flag, and they will persist to oppose to the utmost, that power which is exerted against injured innocence;"

dated 7th July, sun-set. That night and the next morning, they plundered and laid the town in ashes, burning the meeting-house, episcopal church, and the buildings in general, to the compass of two miles round, so as to reach Green-farms, though not Greenfield. On the Thursday they retreated to their shipping, the militia becoming more numerous than at New-Haven. They crossed the Sound to the shore of Long Island; and from thence sailed afterward to Norwalk, whose fate was similar to that of Fairfield. The numbers killed and wounded on each side during these ravages were inconsiderable. But the conflagration list stands thus—burnt at Norwalk 2 houses of public worship, 80 dwelling houses, 87 barns, 22 stores, 17 shops, 4 mills and 5 vessels—at Fairfield 2 houses of public worship, 82 dwelling houses, 55 barns, 15 stores and 15 shops—at Green-farms 1 house of worship, 15 dwelling houses, 11 barns and several stores—beside the stores burnt at New-Haven and the houses at East-Haven. The prevailing humanity of my countrymen, will not relish these depredations in their genuine appearance, the accounts therefore transmitted or published, must be dressed up so as to make them palatable with the public: but be assured, that the burnings were designed, and without sufficient provocation, both as to private and public buildings; some of the latter, and many of the former, were to my knowledge not near to, but even at a considerable distance from other edifices.—That gen. Tryon

was

1779. was not averſe to engaging in ſuch a ſervice as Lee mentioned the cabinet to have determined upon, is inferred from the animofity he has to thoſe who are attached to the American cauſe. He was however ſtopped from all further progreſs, by an order from Sir H. Clinton for the return of the fleet and troops. Some real or expected movement in the American army might produce ſuch an order.

July
8. No ſooner did gen. Waſhington obſerve how Sir H. Clinton had ſtrengthened the poſts of Stoney-point and Verplank, than he entertained the deſign of attacking them. Toward the end of June, he ordered that a truſty intelligent perſon ſhould be employed to go into the works of the fiſt: and on the 8th of July, he was informed by a defterter, that there was a ſandy beach, on the ſouth ſide of it, running along the flank of the works, and only obſtructed by a flight abbatis, which might afford an eaſy and ſafe approach to a body of troops. He formed plans for attacking both poſts at the ſame inſtant; the executions of which were intruſted with gen. Wayne and gen. Howe. All the Maſſachuſetts light infantry marched from Weſt-point under lieut. col. Hull, in the morning of the 15th, and joined Wayne at Sandy-beach, 14 miles from Stoney-point. The general moved off the ground at twelve o'clock. The roads being exceedingly bad and narrow, and the troops having to paſs over high mountains, through difficult defiles and deep morafſes, were obliged to move in ſingle files the greateſt part of the way. This and the great heat of the day, occaſioned ſuch delay, that it was eight in the evening ere the van arrived within a mile and a half of the enemy, where the men formed
into

into columns, and remained till several of the principal officers, with gen. Wayne, returned from reconnoitring the works. At half after eleven o'clock, the whole moved forward, the van of the right consisting of 150 volunteers, under lieut. col. Fleury, the van of the left, consisting of 100 volunteers, under major Stewart, each with unloaded muskets and fixed bayonets, preceded by a brave and determined officer, with twenty picked men, to remove the abbatis and other obstructions. The last and the overflowing of the morass in front, by the tide, prevented the assault's commencing till about 20 minutes after twelve. Previous to it, Wayne placed himself at the head of the right column, and gave the troops the most pointed orders not to fire on any account, but place their whole dependence on the bayonet, which order was faithfully obeyed. Such was the ardor of the troops, that, in the face of a most tremendous and incessant fire of musketry, and from cannon loaded with grape shot, they forced their way at the point of the bayonet, through every obstacle, and both columns met in the centre of the enemy's works nearly at the same instant. Fleury struck their standard with his own hand. Notwithstanding the provocations given by the plunderings and burnings at New Haven, East Haven, Fairfield and Green-farms, of which they had heard, such was the humanity of the continental soldiers, that they scorned to take the lives of the foe calling for mercy, so that there were but few of the enemy killed upon the occasion. Great is the triumph of the Americans upon the success of this enterprise; and justly, for it would have done honor to the most veteran troops. Wayne had but 15 killed, and 83 wounded, not above 30 of whom

1779- will be finally lost to the service. The general himself received a slight wound in the head with a musket ball; but it did not prevent his going on with the troops; and he is not included in the wounded. The enemy had only 63 killed. Lieut. col. Johnson, who commanded the fort, with other officers and privates, amounting to 543, were made prisoners.

The attack upon Verplank, intrusted with gen. Howe, miscarried partly through delays occasioned by high winds, which prevented the timely transportation of artillery; but chiefly through the troops neglecting to take axes with them. The enemy, upon their approach, broke down all the bridges, and thereby cut off the communication by land. Before Howe could receive the means for constructing temporary bridges, Sir H. Clinton marched up troops sufficient to save the place. Gen. Washington not being in sufficient force to hold possession of Stoney-Point, resolved upon the removal of the cannon and stores, and upon the destruction of the works; which were accomplished with all dispatch. About a week before, a certain officer, whose station gave him the opportunity of catching deserters from the American camp, was so enraged at their being very numerous, that he informed the general he would cut off the head of the next that fell into his hands: the general wrote immediately, and prohibited such execution; but it had taken place ere the letter was received, and the head was forwarded to gen. Washington. He was shocked at receiving it, and also greatly alarmed from an apprehension of its exciting a general disgust and uneasiness among the people at large, should it be known. Express orders were given to the officer to conduct him-

self properly for the future; his rashness was afterward 1779.
atoned for in measure, by his contributing much to the
success of the enterprise against Stoney-point.

Congress unanimously resolved upon thanks to gen. July
Washington, for the vigilance, wisdom and magnani- 26.
mity, with which he had conducted the military opera-
tions of the states, and manifested particularly in his or-
ders for the above enterprise. They also thanked gen.
Wayne for his brave, prudent and soldierly conduct, in
his spirited and well conducted attack. They highly
commended the coolness, discipline and firm intrepidity
of the officers and soldiers. They took proper notice
of lieut. col. Fleury and major Stewart; and warmly ap-
plauded lieut. Gibbons and lieut. Knox, who led on the
forlorn hope, and preceded the vans of the two columns,
and gave to each a brevet of captain. They further re-
solved, that a medal emblematical of the action be struck,
and that one of gold be presented to gen. Wayne, and
a silver one to both Fleury and Stewart; and that the
value of the military stores taken be ascertained and di-
vided among the troops, by whom Stoney-point was
reduced.

Being brought to mention congress, let me detail
some of their further proceedings.

The first commissary general, col. Joseph Trumbull,
is no more; his decease has been thought to have been
brought on by the proceedings of congress relative to Mar.
him: they however resolved, that with great care, in- 30.
dustry, labor and attention, he instituted a plan by which
the army, during his continuance in office, was amply
supplied with much oeconomy, and to general satisfac-
tion; and that certain allowances should be made for
the

- the benefit of his legal representatives. They resolved,
- 1779- April 20. "That suspicions and animosities have arisen among the late and present commissioners, namely, Doctor B. Franklin, Mr. Silas Deane, Mr. Arthur Lee, Mr. Ralph Izard, and Mr. William Lee, highly prejudicial to the honor and interest of the United States. It was resolved,
27. that the president inform the commander in chief, that if he wants specie for secret services, he may draw to the amount of 2000 guineas upon the treasurer, who will pay the same.—Bills prepared by the committee of the treasury on doctor Franklin, in favor of the committee of commerce, for the sum of 360,000 livres tournois, for the purpose of importing military stores, were ordered to be signed by the president; and it was resolved,
- June 10. "That the faith of the United States be pledged to make good any contract or engagement which shall be entered into by their minister plenipotentiary at the court of France, for procuring money or credit to enable him to honor the said bills, and provide for their punctual discharge." The next day it was agreed to borrow twenty millions of continental dollars, at an interest of six per cent. per annum. Three days after, it was resolved upon the report of a committee, "That congress are satisfied with the conduct of doctor John Morgan while acting as director general and physician in chief in the general hospitals of the United States; and
14. that this resolution be published." Congress in a letter of congratulation to his most christian majesty on the birth of a princess, say among other things—"Permit us to request the favor of your majesty to oblige us with portraits of yourself and royal consort, that by being placed in our council chamber, the representatives of these

these states may daily have before their eyes the first¹⁷⁷⁹ royal friends and patrons of their cause." They in another letter request his majesty to furnish them with the necessary supplies of arms, ammunition and clothing, the estimate of which their minister was to lay before him, and they pledged the faith of the States for the repayment with interest, of whatever sums may be advanced for the purpose, as soon as the restoration of peace shall enable them.

The minister of France had a conference with congress in a committee of the whole. He introduced the conference by saying, that he had received some dispatches from his court, which he was ordered to communicate to congress, but that he expected no answer:—that though it was not the usual practice to offer communications of this nature in writing, yet as it had been intimated to him by the president, that this mode would be most agreeable to congress, he had committed the heads of them to paper, not as a memorial, but merely for the assistance of the memory, in a form to which the term of *ad statum legendi* is appropriated by the usage of the courts of Europe:—that in reading the said paper, he would take the liberty of making some explanations and reflections.

Ad statum legendi delivered by the minister plenipotentiary.

1. The king has approved all the overtures, which were made by his minister plenipotentiary to the honorable congress, respecting the affairs of Mr. de Beaumarchais; therefore a line ought to be drawn between the stores which this gentleman has been permitted to take out of the royal magazines, for which he has consti-

1779. tuted himself debtor to the department of war, and between those articles which the same gentleman has bought in the way of common trade for the use of the United States.

2. A hint having been given to the minister plenipotentiary, that congress desire to recruit their ships in France from the English prisoners there, the court in consequence of his representation is willing to facilitate this mode of recruiting seamen.

3. The king and ministry were extremely pleased with the resolution congress has taken to maintain only one minister plenipotentiary at their court, as well as with the exclusive appointment of so steady and honest a man, and so firm and solid a patriot as Dr. Franklin.

4. The congress has given a very great satisfaction to the court of France, by the convenient and spirited step which was taken, to disavow a certain ill-grounded and pernicious doctrine, relating to the mutual obligation of the allies, to conclude no truce or peace without the knowledge and consent of each other. The court of France is of opinion, that this doctrine could only be maintained by those men, whose aim would be to seek by any means to weaken the ties of the alliance, and to create disgust and diffidence between the allies.

5. This court has received with some surprise, the intelligence, that congress has published the treaties concluded with her, without the previous knowledge and consent of the interested party. It is not to be denied, that such proceeding is but little consistent with reason, and with the general practice of courts and nations: nevertheless, this observation involves not any kind of reproach, but the king thinks that so noble and so generous

nerous a system of politics could nor but produce desirable effects by its publication.

6. The intelligence that in the first months of last winter, there were no adequate preparations made in America toward a vigorous and successful campaign, was received at Versailles with all the concern, which the dangers of the United States, and the prolongation of the present contest can create in the most friendly mind. The court of France is fully of opinion, that the exertions of the United States are necessary to bring the common enemy to a proper sense of all the disappointments which he shall meet with.

7. This court being very desirous to acquaint congress exactly with the state of affairs relating to the common cause, would not delay to inform this honorable body, that the court of London showing on one side dispositions to a reconciliation with France, rejects on the other side the very idea of a formal and explicit acknowledgment of the independence of the United States, which his most christian majesty perseveres to hold up as a preliminary and essential condition. The behaviour of the common enemy in this respect, rendered a great deal more probable the conjecture which was communicated to congress some time ago, that the point of honor and pride of the king of England, will be the greatest obstacle to the conclusion of the peace upon those explicit terms; and perhaps the manner of overcoming this difficulty, will of course become the most decisive object of the deliberation of congress, when this honorable body shall determine to make peace. It is presupposed whatever *mezzo termine* may be hit upon, that England shall treat with the United States as with a

1779 free people, and evacuate immediately all the territories belonging to them.

The substance of what the minister said at the conference, in explanation of the several foregoing articles.

1. From the bills and accounts with which congress have been furnished by Mr. de Beaumarchais, congress would be enabled to distinguish those articles which were drawn from the royal magazines, and those which he supplied in a way of trade: for those last congress would without doubt make remittances to Mr. de Beaumarchais in their own way, to enable him to perform the contracts he had entered into as a merchant. That for the former articles, the king his master taking upon himself to be creditor to the United States, would wait until the congress should find it convenient to make compensation.

2. Though his court had not resolved to retaliate upon the prisoners in their hands for injuries done to prisoners by the common enemy; yet for the reasons assigned, the king his master had assented to the proposal; but in carrying this matter into execution, it would be proper to take such precautions, and to give such orders to the captains, or other persons employed in the business, that it might be managed with prudence.

3. There is every reason to believe, that congress will receive very soon proofs of the confidence which his court was always willing to show to the servants of these states. The personal character of Dr. Franklin will enable the court to act with a frankness becoming the alliance; and they will have no occasion to withhold any more the secrets which may interest the United States and the alliance.

4. The

4. The king his master, after this explicit step, relies¹⁷⁷⁹ with the highest confidence upon the candor and faithfulness of congress, in understanding as well as in executing the treaty, and in rejecting every arbitrary and unnatural interpretation or construction, which false subtle or designing men can contrive. Congress by their own feelings must be sensible, that such interpretations and constructions are always hurtful, against common decency and dignity, and may oftentimes endanger mutual confidence, and of course the very existence of a treaty: but the sense of congress, as manifested in this particular affair, gives his court the greatest hope, that there shall be no further motive to the painful reflections which that affair excited.

5. He begged leave to add, that this publication interfered with the situation of affairs in Europe, and was in a certain degree disadvantageous to the common cause; because it gave the common enemy a full knowledge of our system and our mutual engagements, without procuring us any reason to guess at their views and resolutions. Happily these inconveniencies have not been felt, and ample compensation has been obtained by convincing the people of America, not only that the treaty was just and equal, but that the heavy task which France has taken upon her was magnanimous, gratuitous and without reward: the whole world was at the same time convinced, that war conquests and ambition were not the objects of the alliance, nor of any of the allies, but only the peaceable enjoyment of the sovereignty, liberty, security and independence of these United States: and this conviction gave much honor, credit and consideration to the alliance.

1779. 6. On this he observed, that he had endeavoured since the last fall, by order of his court, to impress on every mind, that England will never evacuate New York willingly, and could only be brought by proper exertions on the part of America, to think seriously of granting her independence. He believed that congress had adopted a system conformable to their engagements and the situation of affairs: his court was better informed than he was: but without reflecting on past events, the king hopes his amicable apprehensions will be overcome by the success of the campaign; that henceforth the United States will follow the example set them by his majesty, and that they will exert themselves in their own cause, as his majesty exerts himself for their sake and in their cause which he has adopted.

7. He said, that he was authorized to tell congress in confidence, that this reflection is the result of the observations which the court of Spain made upon the conduct of England, throughout her negotiations of mediation:—That the British ministry seem to be solicitous to be reconciled with France, and to keep up this negotiation; that from thence probable hopes may be entertained of their internal disposition to peace; but at the same time they reject with haughtiness the formal acknowledgment of the independence inserted by France and Spain. New orders have been given to the Spanish ambassador at London, to ascertain as nearly as possible those dispositions. In these circumstances the king his master ordered him to communicate this intelligence to the United States, that they may if they think proper take under consideration, if it would not be expedient to give their plenipotentiary instructions and full powers, founded

founded upon the necessity of the conjunctures and upon 1779. the treaty of alliance, the express and formal terms of which are, that peace shall not be made without an express or tacit acknowledgment of the sovereignty, and consequently a fortiori of the rights inherent in sovereignty, as well as of the independence of the United States in matters of government and commerce. This substantial alternative in an engagement, which is a mere gratuitous gift without any compensation or stipulation, ought indeed never to be forgot in a negotiation for peace. France foresaw the extreme difficulties a formal and explicit acknowledgment might meet with. She knew by her own experience in similar contests, in which she has been deeply concerned respecting the republic of Holland, Genoa, and the Swiss Cantons, how tenacious monarchs are, and how repugnant to pronounce the humiliating *formula*. It was only obtained for Holland tacitly after a war of thirty years, and explicitly after a resistance of seventy. To this day Genoa and the Swiss Cantons have obtained no renunciation, nor acknowledgment either tacit or formal from their former sovereigns: but they enjoy their sovereignty and independence only under the guarantee of France. His court thought it important to provide, that difficulties of this nature, which reside merely in words, should not delay or prevent America from enjoying the thing itself. From these considerations arose the very important and explicit stipulation in the treaty, which he just now related, and which hath received the sanction of the United States. The circumstances seem already such as call for the application of the alternative of tacit or explicit acknowledgment. All these considerations therefore are mentioned, that

1779-congress may, if they think proper, consider whether the literal execution of the treaty in this point is not become necessary, and whether the safety and happiness of the American people, as well as the essential principles of the alliance, are not intimately connected with the resolutions that may be taken on this subject: and it remains with the prudence of congress to examine, whether instructions on some particular conditions may not frustrate the salutary purpose of the treaty of alliance relative to a tacit acknowledgment, which the situation of affairs may require. "In thus executing the orders," continued he, "I have received, I cannot omit observing, that these orders were given with the full presumption, that the business which I laid before congress in February last, would have been settled long before these dispatches should come to my hands. However sensibly my court will be disappointed in her expectations, I shall add nothing to the information and observations, which, with the warmest zeal for the interest and honor of both countries, and by the duties of my office and my instructions, I found myself bound to deliver from time to time to congress in the course of this business. The apprehension of giving new matter to those who endeavour to cast blame upon congress is a new motive for me to remain silent. I beg only to remind this honorable body of the aforesaid information and reflections, and particularly of those which I had the honor to deliver to an assembly similar to the present. I shall only insist on a single point which I established then and since in one of my memorials, namely the manifest and striking necessity of enabling Spain, by the determination of just and moderate terms, to press upon

England with her good offices, and to bring her mediation to an issue, in order that we may know whether we are to expect peace or war. This step is looked upon in Europe as immediately necessary. It was the proper object of the message I delivered in February last. I established then (in a private audience) the strong reasons which require, that at the same time and without delay proper terms should be offered to his catholic majesty, in order to reconcile him perfectly to the American interest. I did not conceal, that it was to be feared that any condition inconsistent with the establishment of the alliance which is the binding and only law of the allies, and contrary to the line of conduct which Spain pursued in the course of her mediation, would lead her to drop the mediation, and prevent his catholic majesty by motives of honor and faithfulness from joining in our common cause, and from completing the intended triumvirate. No loss, no unhappy event could be so heavy upon the allies as this. Indeed although the British forces are already kept in check by the combined efforts of France and America, it is nevertheless evident that the accession of Spain only can give to the alliance a decided superiority adequate to our purposes, and free us from the fatal chance, that a single unlucky event may overturn the balance."

The committee then taking notice of what the minister had said concerning *a tacit assurance of the independence of these states*, requested to know his sense concerning the manner in which such tacit assurance could be given; to which he, premising that what he should now say ought to be considered only as his private sentiments, replied—That the British court would probably endea-

your

1779 your to avoid an express acknowledgment by imitating precedents that had occurred in Europe on similar occasions, instancing in the case of the Swiss Cantons, and of the United Provinces of Holland; that the mode adopted in the latter case had been for the arch-dukes, to whom the king of Spain had transferred his right of sovereignty, to treat with them as free and independent states: and that with respect to the Cantons, France had not been able to obtain more for them in the treaty of Munster, than "a declaration that they should be in possession as of full liberty and exemption from the empire, and be in no manner subject to the jurisdiction thereof:"—but that in his opinion, the circumstances of these states, and the manner in which they had conducted their opposition, would justify their expecting a more full declaration.

Mr. Gerard by strongly urging congress, in February, to come to an ultimatum, that so no promising negotiations might be delayed or obstructed, contributed toward putting the states into a profound sleep. They amused themselves with idle dreams of peace, and hardly made any exertions for the war. Till about the time of the above conference, the army scarcely received a single recruit, though a large part of it dissolved in the course of last winter and spring, by the expiration of the term of service for which the men were engaged. Gen. Washington has a prospect of 1000, or 1500 levies, at enormous bounties, for nine months from Massachusetts and Connecticut, which is all the reinforcement he expects. Inferior in strength to the enemy, he will be able to do little more than take care of himself, and guard the communication of the North River. The dis-

distressing situation of public affairs led the late president of congress, Mr. Laurens, to write to his friend—"Let us look around and inquire into the state of the army, the navy, the treasury—the view is truly affecting; but what is most of all to be deplored is, the torpidity of national virtue. How many men are there who now in secret say, could I have believed it would have come to this, I would —. — I am not of that number." 1779.
July
14.

Captain Cunningham, who took and carried the Dutch packet into Dunkirk, (Vol. II. p. 453) being captured on board a private armed cutter in the West Indies, was brought to New York, put under a rigorous and ignominious confinement, and ordered to be sent to Great Britain. Congress was induced by it to order a letter to be written to the British naval commander at New York, demanding the reasons for the treatment he had met with; and resolved, that if they had not a satisfactory answer by the 1st of August, one or more persons should be confined to abide the fate of the said Cunningham. Two days after, congress having well considered the letters before them, giving an account of the devastations of the enemy, and the burning of Fairfield, Norwalk and Bedford, "Resolved—That the marine committee be and are hereby directed to take the most effectual means to carry into execution the manifesto of October 30, 1778, by burning and destroying the towns belonging to the enemy in Great Britain and the West Indies." 17.

The operations of war demand our further notice.

A daring and dangerous enterprise against the enemy's post at Powle's Hook was committed to major Lee. The object was to throw a lustre upon the American arms

1779 arms by surprising the posts, and immediately retiring with such prisoners as the major could conveniently make. Did it appear too hazardous, either in the execution or the difficulty of effecting a retreat, he was at liberty to abandon it. The necessity of making a timely and safe retreat, was strongly inculcated by the commander in chief, and the major was desired to lose no time in attempting to remove or destroy any stores, or even in collecting stragglers. The major, with a party of 300 Virginians, a troop of dismounted dragoons, and one company from the Maryland line, proceeded on the service, and very early in the morning, before day light, completely surprised the post. Major Sutherland the commandant, with a number of Hessians, had the good fortune to escape, by reason of the darkness, to a small block house on the left of the fort. Major Lee killed about 30 of the enemy, and took 161 prisoners, including 7 officers, at the expence of about half a dozen men killed and wounded. In conformity to his orders, he made an immediate retreat without tarrying to destroy either barracks or artillery. The approach of day, and the vicinity of the enemy's main body, rendered it absolutely necessary. Lord Stirling took judicious measures to forward the enterprize, and to secure the retreat of Lee's party. This affair for the size of it, may be ranged with the most heroic actions of the war; considering the peculiar position of Powle's-Hook, and its being garrisoned by 200 men.

The expeditions carrying on against Penobscot by the Massachusetts, and against the Mohawks by the United States, will be related when brought to a close. Gen. Sullivan being called away to command the latter,

gen.

gen. Gates left Boston and went to Providence. In 1779. May a number of the troops under him, mutinied and were upon the point of marching off for want of bread: he prevailed upon them to stay a few days. During that period, he by express ordered flour immediately up from Boston, which however could not have been procured, had it not been from the captures just brought in by the cruisers. The American privateers, the state and continental vessels, have been very successful in capturing and getting safe into port a number of West India ships and others of great value, more than sufficient to counterbalance by much the losses the United States have sustained in a similar way. It was computed, on the 15th of July, that within six or seven weeks preceding, upward of 20,000 barrels of provisions, designed for the use of the enemy, had found their way into the Massachusetts ports. But for these and such like captures, the inhabitants would have been under the greatest difficulty through a prevailing scarcity. One while there was such a want of bread in Boston, that families who had lived well were without it many days. The price however of all articles, is rapidly rising in a continual succession, occasioned chiefly by the enormous quantity of paper currency, genuine and counterfeit, that is in circulation. This rise of commodities, and the associated depreciation of continental money, has spread such an alarm, that at Philadelphia and in the Massachusetts, the inhabitants are attempting afresh to remedy both, by a regulation of prices—which, like Sisyphus's stone, will never reach the summit of the evil.

1779. We have heard within these few days, by a letter from Martinico of June 29th, that adm. Byron having left St. Lucie with an intention, as it is thought, of conveying a large British West India fleet through the passages, count d'Estaing immediately embraced the opportunity, and planned an expedition against St. Vincent, which succeeded. We are also informed, that since then, Mr. de la Motte Piquet, with five ships of the line, had joined the count, who finding himself sufficiently strong, had planned an expedition against Grenada, and was to sail for that island the day after the date of the letter.

June
16.

The count sent lieut. De Trolong Du Romain to St. Vincent, with about 450 men, only half of them regulars, who landed the 16th of June, and were immediately joined by the Caribs; they then possessed themselves of the heights which commanded the town of Kingston. On the 18th, the island was delivered up by capitulation without having made any resistance. This may have been owing partly to the inhabitants being in dread of the Caribs, and partly to their apprehended danger from attempting a defence, and none from changing sovereigns.

Aug.
3.

Mr. Gerard has obtained leave to return to France, on account of the ill state of his health; and the new minister plenipotentiary, the chevalier de la Luzerne, is arrived at Boston in a French frigate. Mr. John Adams accompanied him, his commission having been superseded the last September, by the appointment of Dr. Franklin, minister plenipotentiary at the court of France. The carrying of this appointment was a favorite measure with Mr. de Vergennes; as he expects from the doctor

doctor singly more obsequious devotion to the pleasure of the French court, than he could have obtained had the doctor been still joined to both or either of his former colleagues, Messrs. John Adams and Arthur Lee.

LETTER IX.

Rotterdam, Nov. 10, 1779.

FRIEND G.

TOWARD the end of April, an expedition against the Isle of Jersey was set on foot under Mr. de Naffau, who had no fortune, with a view of putting money into his pocket, from the rapine and plunder that would follow upon its success. It so happened, that adm. Arbuthnot, who you have heard sailed on the 1st of May, with a Squadron of men of war, and a prodigious convoy of merchantmen and transports for America, fell in with the vessel, going express to England, with an account of the attack, and the apparent imminent danger of the island. Upon that he ordered the convoy to wait for him at Torbay, and proceeded to the relief of Jersey. Though the failure of the expedition was the consequence, the French comforted themselves, when they saw it had the unexpected effect of detaining adm. Arbuthnot for a long time at Torbay, and of inducing the admiralty to order ten ships of the line, under

Political Memoirs,

1779. adm. Darby, to join the former, for the safe escorting the convoy to a certain distance. Mr. Sartine, upon obtaining information of this order, hurried the Brest fleet under count d'Orvilliers to sea. There were not at the last moment, sailors sufficient to man it; but neither this, nor the non-arrival of two ships expected from Toulon, could prevail with him to risk losing the opportunity on the one hand of intercepting Darby on his return, and on the other of securing the junction of the French and Spanish fleets. Eight thousand land forces were put on board to serve as marines, and to supply the defect of sailors. With this kind of equipage did the fleet sail on the 4th of June. There was a general exultation visible in every Frenchman's countenance at Paris, mixed with surprise, upon hearing that their fleet was sailed, and that there was no British force at sea to oppose them. Not a word was put into the gazette of France of d'Orvilliers' sailing. It is asserted, that Sartine being asked, why he did not let a thing so public, and so interesting, go into the gazette, his answer was—"The English ministry will not know it so soon any other way." Darby however, narrowly escaped, to the great disappointment of the keenest expectations of the French, who really looked upon his division as a sure prey. Foreigners are astonished at the present management of the British marine. They look back to former wars, when it was deemed a most consequential service, and the most concise mode of crippling the marine of France, and rendering their projects abortive, to block up the harbours of Brest and Toulon. When d'Orvilliers had sailed, a profound secrecy reigned at the court of France as to his destination: but by the 6th of July, certain

certain advices were received of his having joined the Spanish fleet, upon the 24th of June. Before the junction, though not its apparent certainty, a manifesto was presented by the marquis d'Almodovar, the Spanish ambassador, accompanied with the notice of his immediate departure. The manifesto established this fact, that Spain had taken a decided part with France and America against Great Britain. It cost the court of Versailles great pains to goad the catholic king's ministers to a decided resolution in the councils of Madrid; and after all, it has been said by a respectable authority, "That there had been no declaration from Spain, if the English fleet had been at sea," in force and in season to have prevented the junction, which was regarded as that on which the very salvation of France depended. The spirits of the French were as drooping as can be well conceived, till they had heard of that event, and of the arrival of the two reinforcements forwarded to count d'Estaing*.

When the Spanish ambassador once knew that d'Orvilliers failed on the 4th of June, and that the British grand fleet remained at Spithead on the 14th, he must assure himself, that the junction of the French and Spanish ones would take place, and could not be prevented by the other; and that therefore he might proceed without any demur to deliver the manifesto. This event will, most probably, be more favorable in the issue to the American states, than success in the Spanish mediation on the terms his catholic majesty proposed, which were—That the two crowns of Great Britain and France should disarm and agree to a universal suspension

* Political Memoirs.

1779. of hostilities;—That the plenipotentiaries of both should meet at an appointed place to settle their respective differences;—That a like suspension should be granted by Great Britain to the American colonies [as they were stiled] which should not be broken, without giving to his catholic majesty an anticipated notice of one year, that he might communicate it to the said American provinces; and that there should be a reciprocal disarming and a regulation of the limits not to be passed by either, as to the places they might respectively occupy at the time of ratifying this adjustment;—That there should come to Madrid one or more commissioners of the colonies and of his Britannic majesty, to agree in settling the preceding particulars and others relative to the firmness of the said suspension, and that, in the mean time, the colonies should be treated as independent in acting. The contents of the manifesto were laid before both houses of parliament the day after its being presented, and were accompanied with a message from the king. They both concurred unanimously in resolving to support with spirit and vigor the war against the house of Bourbon. An answer was transmitted by his majesty's secretary, lord Weymouth, to the marquis d'Almodovar, dated July 13th, ten days after the rising of parliament.

July
13.

This answer was received when a state-paper was nearly printed off at Madrid, and which related the motives that induced the Spanish monarch to withdraw his ambassador, and act hostilely against Great Britain. This paper asserts, that the British ministry, while they rejected the proposals made by Spain, were insinuating themselves at the court of France by means of secret emissaries, and making great offers to her to abandon the colonies,

colonies, and to make a peace with Britain; and at the 1779. same time were treating, by means of another emissary with Dr. Franklin, to whom they made various proposals to disunite them from France, and to accommodate matters with Britain, not only holding out conditions similar to those which they had rejected, when coming through his catholic majesty, but including offers much more favorable to the Americans.

Count d'Orvilliers having received instruction, steered with the combined fleets, amounting to 66 ships of the line, for Plymouth. The coasts of Normandy and Brittany, being at the same time crowded with troops, and the ports in the bay and channel with shipping, exhibited the appearance of an intended invasion of England or Ireland. D'Orvilliers passed Sir Charles Hardy, who was cruising in the bay with near 40 ships of the line, (having sailed from Spithead the day on which the Spanish manifesto was presented) without their having the least knowledge of each other. He appeared off Plymouth in the evening, and the greatest part of the two following days; but without making any attempt, which had it taken place immediately, must have succeeded, as the town was altogether in a defenceless state, with "neither men, capable of standing to the guns, nor rammers, sponges, or other implements for loading them *." The inhabitants and the neighbouring country were in the greatest confusion and in the utmost alarm. But on Wednesday the 18th, it providentially began to blow almost a storm at east, which continued till the 22d, and forced the fleet below Plymouth; and

Aug.
16.

* Mr. H—b—t's declaration. Gentleman's Magazine for 1780, p. 109.

1779. the wind remaining strong in the same point for some days, prevented its return no less than Sir Charles Hardy's coming into the channel*. The Ardent of 64 guns, on her way from Portsmouth to join Sir Charles, mistaking the combined for the British fleet, was taken in sight of Plymouth. D'Orvilliers ranged about the Lands End, the Scilly Islands, and the chops of the channel, till the end of the month, without seeking to return and make an attack upon Plymouth. He might conclude, that it would be now too late, the first opportunity having been lost; especially as a very great sickness prevailed among the sailors and soldiers on board the fleet. Thus by a coincidence of circumstances, Plymouth, with the dock, the naval magazines, &c. were happily preserved, notwithstanding the criminal neglect of administration in not putting the place into a proper state of defence. It is a fact, that there was delivered to one of the ministry, on the 28th of July, a letter from France, acquainting him with the destination of the combined fleet, and the intention of attacking and destroying Plymouth.

Aug. 31. The wind favoring, Sir Charles Hardy gained the entrance of the channel in sight of the combined fleets, without their being able to prevent him. The enemy pursued him as high up as Plymouth, but did not venture much further. The sickness increasing on board the combined fleet to a most extreme degree, and their ships being otherwise much out of condition, and the equinox approaching, count d'Orvilliers thought it necessary to abandon the British coasts, and repair to Brest early in September. The whole country round about

* Gentleman's Magazine for 1779, p. 421—423.

became

became an hospital through the many thousands of sick 1779 that were landed. It was a most happy circumstance for the British merchants, that a large Jamaica fleet escaped and got into the channel about ten days before he first entered it; and that eight homeward bound East Indiamen had timely notice of their danger, so as to have the opportunity of putting into Ireland.

In the beginning of September, adm. Barrington arrived with dispatches, giving an account of the taking of the isles of St. Vincent and Grenada, and of an action between adm. Byron and count d'Estaing. The count sailed for Grenada, and arrived off the island with a fleet of five or six and twenty ships of the line, about 12 frigates, and near 10,000 land forces, including marines. The defence of the place lay in about 150 soldiers and 350 militia, 200 volunteers, with some seamen; and its strength consisted in a fortified and intrenched hill, which commanded the fort, harbour, and capital town of St. George. The French landed between 2 and 3000 regulars, under count Dillon, the same evening; and the next day invested the hill, and made the necessary preparations for carrying it by storm the following night, as they would lose no time, lest adm. Byron's fleet might arrive. The defence was obstinate, considering the force on each side. Although d'Estaing headed a column of the assailants in person, they were repulsed in the first onset; but their superior numbers at length prevailed, and the lines were carried after a conflict of about an hour and a half; the loss of the French however in killed and wounded was considerable. The cannon taken on the top of the hill, being turned at break of day against the fort, the governor,

July
2.

1779. lord Macartney, was under the necessity of proposing a capitulation. D'Estaing granted him but an hour for framing the articles, which when presented, were rejected in the gross. The count proposed others so extraordinary, that his lordship and the principal inhabitants thought it better to trust to the law and custom of nations, and to the justice of one court, and the interposition of the other, by surrendering at discretion, than to bind themselves to such unexampled conditions. His lordship, in expectation that the fortified hill was next to impregnable, had carried thither his plate, jewels, and most valuable effects, and his principal officers had followed his example*. The count is charged with having exercised great severity and oppression; and it is said, that his soldiers were indulged in such unbridled licence, that the condition of the inhabitants would have been deplorable beyond description, but for the humanity and tenderness of the officers and privates of Dillon's Irish regiment.

Meanwhile, adm. Byron had returned to St. Lucie, from convoying the West India fleet; but weakened through the ships he had sent with the trade to Great Britain. He there received intelligence of the loss of St. Vincent; and immediately concluded with gen. Grant to proceed with the land and naval forces for its recovery. On their passage, they received information that d'Estaing had attacked Grenada, without being acquainted with de la Motte Piquet's having joined him. They changed their intention, and steered for the relief of Grenada.

* The Paris account of the taking of Grenada.

The British commanders arrived within sight of the French fleet at break of day. Their force consisted of 21 ships of the line and a single frigate. They were embarrassed by the somewhat greater number of transports which conveyed the troops. The French having received previous information of the approach of the British fleet, were then mostly getting under way, and those ships which had not already hoisted their anchors, slipped their cables, and kept stretching out to sea. The objects of the hostile commanders were totally different. The British admiral's wanted to bring the enemy to close action in hopes of conquest and of saving Grenada. D'Estaing sought for no further advantage than the preservation of his new acquisition, which to him was a sufficient victory. His ships being cleaner, and consequently sailing better than the British, he chose a partial action, rather than be exposed to the doubtful issue of a desperate conflict. The first signal made by Byron was for a general chase; and the second, for the ships to engage and form as they could get up. By eight o'clock the action was commenced by adm. Barrington in the Prince of Wales, with the capts. Sawyer and Gardner in the Boyne and Sultan, they having closed with the van of the enemy. Being obliged to endure the whole weight of fire from that division, for a considerable time before they could be supported, they suffered accordingly; beside the damage of the ships and the loss of men, the admiral was himself wounded. The French eluded every effort made by the British commanders to bring on a close and decisive engagement. When the evolutions on both sides, and the eagerness on one, threw a few of the British ships into a situation, which obliged

1779. them to endure a conflict with a much greater number of the enemy, a close engagement ensued. Thus the Grafton, the Cornwall, and the Lion, sustained the whole fire of the French fleet. The Monmouth attempting singly to arrest the progress of the enemy's van, hoping thereby to bring on a general action, but failing, was reduced almost to a wreck. The Suffolk, adm. Rowley, with the Fame, suffered also considerably in similar situations.

The action ceased about twelve o'clock; but although renewed at two, and at other times, in a degree, during the evening, yet nothing essential was effected. During the heat of it, some British ships pushing their way to the very entrance of the harbour of St. George's, beheld French colours on the fort, and were fired at by the batteries. The object of the British commanders was therefore totally changed. The relief of the island was at an end. The protection of the transports, along with that of the disabled ships, was now the main point to be considered. Three of the disabled ships were a great way astern: the Lion was obliged to bear away singly, in the best manner she could, before the wind. That and the other two might seemingly have been cut off by the French: but d'Estaing would not risk the bringing on of a decisive action by attempting their capture. In the evening, the Monmouth and the transports were ordered to make the best of their way to Antigua or St. Kitts. Byron drew up his line, reduced now to 19 ships, about three miles distant from d'Estaing, and expected to be attacked in the morning; but during the night, the count returned to Grenada. The loss of men in the British fleet was moderate

the

the other circumstances of the action however, were exceeding grievous; for the great damage sustained by the ships, in their masts and rigging, which could not be easily remedied in that quarter, afforded an astonishing superiority of force to the French, which while it continues, will render it impossible for the British longer to dispute the empire of the sea with them in the West Indies. All accounts concur in describing the French loss of men in the action as prodigious. The published number of officers killed and wounded, both in the naval and land departments, is considerable. The other must be in a great degree conjectural.

The latter end of July, there sailed from Port l'Orient the Bon Homme Richard, of 40 guns and 375 men, commanded by capt. Paul Jones, the Alliance of 36 guns, the Pallas a French frigate of 32, the Vengeance an armed brig of 12, together with a cutter: Jones acted as commodore to the squadron. He steered for the Western coast of Ireland, and appeared off Kerry. From thence he ranged round the north of Scotland, till he came off Forth Frith on September the 19th; when he directed his course to Flamborough Head. Being off the Head, he fell in with the fleet from the Baltic, under the protection of the Serapis, capt. Pearson, and the Countess of Scarborough, capt. Piercy. Before noon, capt. Pearson received intelligence from the bailiffs of Scarborough, of the squadron under Jones being on the coast. Between twelve and one the headmost of the fleet got sight of it, when the Serapis made all the sail she could to get between the enemy and the convoy, which she soon effected. Capt. Pearson, by four o'clock, plainly discerning from the deck, that the

Sept. 13.
squadron

1779- squadron consisted of three large ships, and a brig, (the cutter was not now with them) made the Countess of Scarborough's signal to join him, which was done about half past five. A little after seven, the Bon Homme Richard brought to within musket shot of the Serapis, when the fight began, and was maintained with equal fury on both sides, each vessel using all possible means to gain an advantageous situation to rake the other. Capt. Pearson had infinitely the superiority over the Bon Homme Richard in working the Serapis, and obtained advantages in spite of every effort of Jones's to prevent it. Jones, to render such superiority useless, aimed at laying his ship athwart the hawse of the other. Though he did not succeed to his wish, yet as the bow-sprit of the Serapis ran between his poop and mizen mast, he seized the opportunity of lashing the vessels together, when the wind driving the head of the Serapis against the bow of the Bon Homme Richard, they became so close fore and aft, that the muzzles of their guns touched each other's sides. In this position they engaged from half past eight till half past ten. But before it commenced, the Bon Homme Richard had received many 18 lb. shot between wind and water, and was become very leaky. Her tier of 12 pounders was entirely silenced and abandoned. Her six 18 pounders, which were old, were of no service, and were fired but eight times in all. During the succeeding action, Jones made use only of three nine pounders, whose fire was seconded by that of his men in the round tops. At the same time others threw such a quantity and variety of combustible matters into the decks, chains, and every part of the Serapis, that she was on fire not less than 10 or 12 times in different

ferent parts, and it was with the greatest difficulty that 1779 the same could be extinguished. At half past nine, by some accident the *Serapis* had a cartridge of powder set on fire, the flames of which communicating from one to another all the way aft, blew up all the people and officers abaft the main mast, and rendered all those guns useless for the remainder of the action. When both ships were on fire together, as it happened at times, the spectacle was dreadful beyond expression. The Alliance repeatedly sailed round both while engaged, raking the *Serapis* fore and aft, and thereby killing or wounding many of her men on the quarter and main decks*. After ten she came up afresh, and renewed the fire; but through the darkness of the night, and both ships being so close along side each other, it was not poured into the *Serapis* alone, but also into the *Bon Homme Richard*, eleven of whose men were killed, beside an officer mortally wounded, by one of her broadsides. Capt. Pearson however, perceiving that it was impracticable to stand out any longer with the least prospect of success, struck after having (by his conduct and persevering bravery) secured to his convoy the opportunity of saving themselves. The *Serapis* was a much superior ship to the *Bon Homme Richard*, being built on an excellent model, and carrying 44 guns in two tiers, the lower 18 pounders. The number of men killed

* The account printed in the *Courier de l'Europe* of November 5, 1779, signed Paul Jones, states the matter so as to imply a denial of what is asserted in the *Gazette* account, signed R. Pearson; but from the known vanity of Jones, and the utter improbability of the Alliance's remaining totally inactive for so long a time, it is highly reasonable to conclude, that the first account is erroneous.

1779. and wounded on each side was necessarily great. Both ships suffered much: but the Bon Homme Richard was reduced to a wreck: she had near seven feet water in her hold, which kept increasing. The wounded were removed, and only the first lieutenant of the Pallas, with some men left on board to keep the pumps going, while the boats were disposed within call to take them in when occasion required. On the 25th, the water rose to her lower deck and she went down, but no body was lost with her*. It still remains to be mentioned, that the Countess of Scarborough engaged the Pallas for near two hours, when capt. Piercy was obliged to strike. Commodore Jones, with the remains of his flying squadron and prizes, made for Holland, and on the 3d of October anchored off the Texel. The commodore estimates the prizes taken and ransomed by the Bon Homme Richard, during her cruize, at more than 40,000l.

Oct. 29. Sir Joseph Yorke soon applied to their high mightinesses for the delivering up of the Serapis and Countess of Scarborough. On the 29th of October, he presented a memorial to them, in which by his majesty's order, he renews, "in the strongest and most pressing manner, his request that those ships and their crews may be stopped and delivered up, which the pirate Paul Jones, of Scotland, who is a rebel subject, and a criminal of the state, has taken." Jones is stiled a pirate upon the supposition that his letters of marque or commission are illegal for want of being granted by a sovereign power, which the British do not allow the congress to be. But it may be at length discovered, that

* Captain Jones's account,

Jones's letters are legal upon their own principles, and '779- have been granted by the French, whatever other letters he may possess. The whole of Jones's expedition was probably concerted at Versailles, with the design of catching the eastern fleet laden with naval stores, while the continental frigate the Alliance was borrowed for a cover, and the command of the whole given to Jones on account of his acquaintance with the Irish and British coasts. The memorial contains a threatening insinuation of serious consequences in case of non-compliance. The answer which their high mightinesses have given is in brief—"That they will, in no respect whatever, pretend to judge of the legality or illegality of the actions of those who have, on the open sea, taken any vessels which do not belong to this country, and bring them into any of the ports of this republic: that they only open their ports to them to give them shelter from storms or other disasters, and oblige them to put to sea again with their prizes, without unloading or disposing of their cargoes, but letting them remain exactly as when they arrived: and that they are not authorised to pass judgment either on these prizes, or the person of Paul Jones." What would be the fate of Jones could the British once make him their prisoner, is hard to determine; considering that capt. Cunningham was brought in irons from New York to Falmouth and sent ironed to Pendennis castle; from which, however, he was removed in a few weeks to Mill prison, Plymouth; and being a native American, he is now rated as an exchangeable prisoner.

The present state of Ireland must not be passed over without notice.

The

1779. The long continued embargo on provisions, the only staple export of that kingdom, has been viewed as particularly insulting, and most highly resented by the people; on their reflecting, that a set of contractors reaped the greatest benefit from it, while the interest of the country was sacrificed, and the whole nation distressed. Taxes became more numerous, and the national debt accumulated every session of parliament. Advantage was taken of these circumstances, and the peculiar situation of Great Britain, by the most sagacious among the Irish, for the obtaining of those privileges which might otherwise never be secured. The doctrines of taxation without representation, and of unconditional submission, which ministry applied to America, were urged as matter of apprehension to Ireland; and it was openly said, that the chains forged for the former, in case of success, would afford a mode for the fetters which would soon be fitted for the latter. The smothered flame at length broke out with violence, on finding that parliament would afford them no effectual relief. Associations against the purchase and use of British manufactures, and for the encouragement of their own, became universal. But beside these, there were associations of a more effective and terrifying nature. Being alarmed with the danger of a French invasion, it was urged, that the defence of the kingdom must be placed in those who had the best interest in it. Military associations were therefore proposed and universally adopted. The associators declared, that they were intended for the double purpose of defending their safety against foreign enemies, and their rights against domestic usurpation. In every part of the kingdom were seen instantly

to arise, as if by magic, vast bodies of citizens, serving 1779. at their own charges, choosing their own officers, trained to great expertness, and obeying with remarkable regularity. No gentleman, no nobleman could show his face in the country, who did not fall in with the prevailing disposition. Men of considerable fortunes served in the ranks. All this business was accomplished without any sort of confusion or disorder; while the peace of the country, and obedience to the laws, were never more prevalent. The number of trained volunteers is supposed to be about 50,000: they are admirably appointed. Government saw these proceedings with astonishment. They wished to regulate this new and unexpected force, and to bring it to act under the authority of the crown; but after a few feeble attempts, it was thought best to concur in a measure that could not be prevented. The Irish patriots having thus provided for the defence of the kingdom against foreign enemies, began to look toward their own rights; and in general disclaimed the authority of the British parliament over them, and condemned its interference in their affairs. On the 12th of October, the Irish parliament met. Upon a motion for the address, in answer to the speech of the lord lieutenant, an amendment was moved and carried in the house of commons, which occasioned the insertion of the following words in their address to the throne—"We beg leave humbly to represent to your majesty, that it is not by temporary expedients, but by a free trade alone, that this nation is now to be saved from impending ruin." The address from the lords contained similar expressions. Thus it appears, that a free and unlimited commerce with the whole world is the *sine qua non*; with the patriots of

1779. of Ireland, from which they mean not to depart. The prevailing unanimity in political sentiments among the Irish, has been greatly forwarded by their parliament's having before followed the humane example of the British legislature in relaxing the penal restrictions of the laws against the English Roman catholics. The addresses were carried up to the lord lieutenant, with great parade, amid the acclamations of the people. The duke of Leinster, who commanded the Dublin volunteers, escorted the speaker in person upon the occasion, while the streets were lined on both sides from the parliament house to the castle, by that corps drawn up in their arms and uniforms. That nobleman had before moved for the thanks of the lords to the volunteer companies through the kingdom, which was carried with only one dissenting voice.

The present letter closes with mentioning, that the Spaniards have, for some months back, invested Gibraltar both by land and sea; but the garrison seems to be under no apprehensions.

LETTER X.

Roxbury, Jan. 27, 1780.

BEFORE we enter upon a relation of the expeditions against Penobscot and the Mohawks, let me mention, that in the beginning of August, gen. Washington,

ington, to secure himself the more effectually from an ^{1779.} attack by the enemy, while weakened through the absence of the detachment under gen. Sullivan, gave to a double spy, in order to be communicated, the following exaggerated account of his strength—"Fit for duty 17,010, exclusive of the troops under Sullivan, gen. Gates to the eastward, and col. Hazens—the total number much greater—beside these, the new levies, 2000 from Massachusetts—those from Connecticut and other states coming in daily—a plan fixed, by which the whole strength can be drawn together in a few hours upon any great emergency."

Colonel Francis M'Lean was sent from Halifax to establish a post at Penobscot, in the easternmost part of the Massachusetts state. His arrival gave an alarm to ^{June} the government at Boston, and vigorous measures were ^{16.} agreed upon for preventing its establishment. The state was to have the whole honor of the expected success; and therefore Gates, who was at Providence, was neither consulted nor applied to for continental troops. Gen. Lovel was to command the militia, with a small number of state regulars, destined for the service; while capt. Saltonstall, who commanded the Warren continental frigate, acted as commodore to the whole fleet, consisting of near 20 sail, including armed state vessels and privateers, beside 24 transports. An embargo for 40 days was laid by the general court on all shipping, that a full supply of seamen might be the more easily procured. When the armament was ready for sailing, it lay wind bound in Nantasket road for some days. By ^{July} the 25th of July, it appeared off Penobscot. Colonel ^{25.} M'Lean had gained information of its sailing from Boston.

1779 four days before. His intended fort was incapable of affording any good defence. Two of the bastions were untouched; the remaining two with the curtains, were in no part above 4 or 5 feet high and 12 thick; the ditch in most parts not more than 3 feet deep: there was no platform laid, nor any artillery mounted. When the troops had landed, instead of being put upon vigorous service, the general contented himself with summoning the colonel to surrender, which being refused, they were employed two days in erecting a battery at about 750 yards distant from the fort. The colonel improved this opportunity, and what followed during an ineffectual cannonading, for finishing and strengthening his works, till he was out of all apprehension from being stormed; which he was informed by a deserter, on the 12th of August, was to be in a day or two. Colonel M'Lean, with his garrison, to their astonishment, discovered that the Americans had totally abandoned their camp and works in the night, and had reembarked. The cause of this mysterious event was soon evident by the appearance of Sir George Collier in the *Raisonable*, attended with five frigates. While Sir George lay at Sandy Hook, he gained information, on or before the 28th of July, from a Boston paper, as it is confidently asserted, of the expedition against Penobscot. He failed for the relief of the place on the 3d of August. It was not the intention of the Massachusetts government, that gen. Lovel should spend much time against it; on the contrary, the speedy reduction of the place was expected. The business being lengthened out, application was made to gen. Gates for a continental regiment; but before it could reach half way to Penobscot, Sir G. Collier

Collier entered and proceeded up the bay. By eleven 1779; o'clock in the morning, the American fleet presented themselves to his view, drawn up seemingly with the design of disputing the passage; their resolution however soon failed, and an ignominious flight took place. Sir George destroyed and took, including two which were captured on his passage, 19 armed vessels; beside the transports, and some provision vessels. The expedition against the fort was so wretchedly conducted, as to do no credit either to the general or commodore. The army and sailors had to explore a great part of their way back by land, through thick woods and desert wastes.

The Oneidas, and a few others of the six confederated Indian nations, frequently called the Mohawks, were friendly to the Americans: the rest, through the power of presents, with the influence of Sir John Johnson and some others, who had interest among them, departed from the neutrality they had engaged to observe, and distinguished themselves in that cruel and destructive war, which was carried on against the back settlements. Their conduct gave rise to that plan of an expedition into their country, which has been already mentioned—p. 235. When it was to be carried into execution, there were to be only two divisions, the main one under gen. Sullivan, and the other under gen. James Clinton, which was to go by the Mohawk river. When Sullivan was preparing to proceed, he presented to congress a most expensive and extravagant list of enumerated articles, in which was a large number of eggs. He made his detachment equal to 7000 rations per day. Congress were so disgusted with the great demand, and some of

1779. the specified articles, that for some time they would not order him any. The quantity of rifle powder required, was more than could, on any calculation, be necessary. The commander in chief inculcated it upon him, that the success and efficacy of the expedition, depended absolutely on the celerity of his movements, and might be defeated, if he did not proceed as light as possible. The quarter master general supplied him with 1400 horses. When he reached Wyoming, he wrote—"Of the salted meat on hand, there is not a single pound fit to be eaten." The next day, the return of the troops, rank and file, was 2312. Here he waited several weeks, for more men, and for provisions to supply the loss of what had been spoiled through the villainy or carelessness of the commissaries. When gen. Clinton, who came by the Mohawk river without meeting with any opposition, joined him on the 21st of August with about 1600 men of every kind, the whole army with its attendants, battoemen, waggoners, &c. amounted to 5000. Clinton's division would of itself have been sufficient for the expedition, as the Indians against whom they marched were only 550, accompanied by about 250 Tories, making no more than 800 in all, headed by col. Johnson, major Butler and Brandt. They were greatly worn down by their long waiting for Sullivan's approach at Newtown, where they had constructed strong breast works. The general lived well as he marched, having taken a number of casks of tongues with him, beside live cattle to supply him with fresh provision. He kept a most extravagant table, and entertained all the officers upon the plea of securing his influence among them, while he was making extremely free in their presence, with

with the characters of the congress and the board of 1779. war. He carried six light field pieces and two howitzers along with him; and would have the morning and evening gun fired constantly. At length he arrived at New-town; and vaunted in the morning what great things he would do with and against the Indians. He began to engage them, by firing his field pieces at their breast works; which he continued while he detached gen. Poor to the right, round the mountain to fall upon their left flank. Poor had to march a mile and a half in full view of the Indians and their associates, who penetrated his design. They waited however for his approach; but observing (that when his firing announced his being engaged) other movements were made toward them, they quitted their works, and betook themselves to a sudden and precipitate flight. To the left of Sullivan there was a river, and a plain on the right side of it, along which had a force been sent early, they could have marched round undiscovered, and have fallen in nearly upon the centre of the Indians, by the time Poor came upon their left flank. A number of riflemen desired to take that route, but were not permitted. At night Sullivan was not a little mortified upon finding how completely the enemy had escaped. He had 7 men killed and 14 wounded in the course of the day. The army marched on the 31st for Catherine's town, lying on the Seneca-lake. They had to traverse a swamp several miles long; to pass through dangerous defiles, with steep hills on each side; and to ford a river, emptying itself into the lake, considerably broad in many places, with a strong current, and up to the middle of the men: its course was so serpentine, that they had to pass through

1779. it seven or eight times. Sullivan was advised not to enter the swamp till the next day, but in vain. Clinton, who brought up the rear, was sufficiently fatigued by the time he reached the entrance, and being assured, that it would kill the horses and cattle to proceed, desisted from marching forward.

Notwithstanding Sullivan kept out flanking parties as he advanced, such was the steepness of the hills, the narrowness and difficulty of the defiles, that twenty or thirty Indians might have thrown his troops into the utmost confusion. The night was so exceeding dark, that the men could see but a little way before them. They were wearied out, scattered and broken, lost all their spirits, lay down here and there, and wished to die. Had a body of the enemy fallen on them in this situation, it might have produced the most fatal consequences. Now was the general's mind racked and tortured. It was twelve at night before his troops reached the town. The Indian scouts had watched them while it was light; but had no thought of their continuing to march in so dark a night and to so late an hour. Before they got to the first house there was a most dangerous defile, so formed by nature that had it been possessed by the five and twenty Indians, who were in the town roasting corn, they might have shot down, while ammunition lasted, what Americans they pleased when within the reach of their guns and the sight of their eyes, without risking their own persons. When the troops had safely finished their march, Sullivan declared, he would not have such another night for all his command. The men were obliged to halt all the next day to recruit; and suffered more
in

in the preceding, than they would have done in a month's¹⁷⁷⁹ regular march.

General Sullivan continued in the Indian country, spreading desolation and destruction among the towns and plantations of the enemy, without sparing the orchards of apple and peach trees, which had been raised from pips and stones, and in some places properly planted by the advice of the missionary who had lived among them. The heat of the climate, and richness of the soil, will raise good fruit in a few years from kernels that are produced by suitable trees. Several officers thought it a degradation of the army to be employed in destroying apple and peach trees, when the very Indians in their excursions spared them, and wished the general to retract his orders for it. He was told that the trees would in a little time be worth to the continent at least many thousand hard dollars. He continued relentless and said—"The Indians shall see, that there is malice enough in our hearts to destroy every thing that contributes toward their support." Some of the officers however, who were sent out with parties to lay waste the Indian territory, would see no apple or peach trees; so that they were left to blossom and bear, for the refreshment of man or beast, friend or foe that might chance to pass that way. Thus did gen. Hand and col. Durbin do honor to their own characters. By the middle of October gen. Sullivan reached Easton in Pennsylvania on his return to join the main army. He brought back only 300 horses out of the 1400 he took with him. During his expedition, there were eleven Indians killed; two old squaws, a negro, and a white man taken;—18

1779 towns * destroyed, and 150,000 bushels of corn, beside apple and peach trees. By groundless complaints, he displeased the commander in chief, and gave great umbrage to the board of war and the quarter master general. The pompous account † of his military peregrination which he sent to congress, made him the laugh of the officers in the army remaining under gen. Washington; one declared it was a little mischievous to print the whole account; another when he read of elegant Indian houses, was ready to question from the abuse of the epithet, whether he understood the true meaning of the word. He soon felt himself so dissatisfied, that on the 9th of November he begged leave of congress to resign upon the plea of bad health: they, on the last of the month, accepted his resignation.

The carrying on of this expedition did not however prevent the offensive operations of the Indians and their associates. On the 23d of July, a party of 60 Indians, and 27 white men under Joseph Brandt, fell upon the Minisink settlements and burnt 10 houses, 12 barns, a fort and 2 mills, killed and carried off several people with considerable plunder. The militia from Goshen and parts adjacent, to the amount of 149, collected; and pursued them, but without sufficient caution and necessaries, so that they were surprised and totally defeated; no more than 30 returned. Many were killed, a number made prisoners; the rest dispersed and were

* Sullivan in his account says 40; but if a few old houses which had been deserted for several years, were met with and burnt, they were put down for a town. Stables and wood hovels, and lodges in the field, when the Indians were called to work there, were all reckoned as houses.

† See the Remembrancer, vol. ix. p. 158.

missing long after the action. Five days after, capt. 1779. M'Donald at the head of 250 men, a third British, the rest Indians, took Freeland's fort, on the west branch of the Susquehanna; in which were 30 men and 50 women and children; the captain consented that the last should be set at liberty, but the men were made prisoners of war. The party on their way to it had burnt houses and mills, had killed and captivated several of the inhabitants. On the other side, gen. Williamson, with col. Pickens, entered the Indian country about the 22d of August, burnt and destroyed the corn of eight towns, amounting to more than 50,000 bushels. He would hearken to no proposals from the Indians, nor accept of their friendship, but insisted on their removing immediately, with their remaining property, into the settled towns of the Creeks, and residing among their countrymen, to which they agreed. Col. Broadhead also engaged in a successful expedition against the Mingo and Munsey Indians, and the Senecas on the Alleghany river. He left Pittsburgh August the 11th, with 605 rank and file, including militia and volunteers, and did not return till the 14th of September. They went about 200 miles from the fort, destroyed a number of towns, and cornfields to the amount of 500 acres, and made a great deal of plunder in skins and other articles.

The active part which the Spaniards have now taken in the present contest, must issue in favor of the American States. The Spanish governor of Louisiana, Don Bernardo de Galvez, has acknowledged his being apprized of the commencement of hostilities between the courts of Madrid and London, on the 9th of August. The easiest way of accounting for this extraordinary circumstance,

1779. circumstance, considering that the Spanish manifesto was not delivered till the 16th of June, may be by supposing that the Spanish admiral had orders immediately upon his joining count d'Orvillicrs, to dispatch a vessel to inform the Spanish governors in America, that hostilities were then commencing; and that the said vessel had so good a passage as to admit of Don Galvez receiving the dispatches on the 9th of August, within forty-six days after the junction of the combined fleet. The governor proceeded to collect the whole force of his pro-

Aug. vince at New Orleans, and then publicly recognized the
19. independency of the American States by beat of drum. Every thing being in readiness for the purpose, he immediately marched against the British settlements on the Mississippi. The whole force, British and German, stationed for their protection, did not amount to 500 men: and had no other cover than a newly constructed fort, or rather field redoubt. Here however lieut. col. Dickson stood a siege of nine days, and then obtained
Sept. conditions honorable to the garrison and favorable to
the inhabitants. Nothing could exceed the good faith with which the Spanish governor observed the prescribed conditions; nor the humanity and kindness with which he treated his prisoners. A Spanish gentleman, Don Juan de Mirailles, has resided at Philadelphia for some considerable time: he appears to be empowered by the court of Madrid to act as their agent, and transacts his business with congress through the medium of the French ambassador. Being thus led to mention congress, let us quit the operations of the field for the determinations of the grand council of the American States.

Congress having at length concluded upon an ultimatum after much deliberation and debate, they agreed upon instructions to the commissioner to be appointed to negotiate a treaty of peace with Great Britain, and to the minister plenipotentiary at the court of France. They pointed out to the first the boundaries he was to insist upon, and further said—"As the great object of the present defensive war on the part of the allies is to establish the independency of the United States, and as any treaty whereby this end cannot be obtained must be only ostensible and illusory, you are therefore to make it a preliminary article to any negotiation, that Great Britain shall agree to treat with the United States as sovereign, free and independent:—You shall take special care also that the independence of the said states be effectually assured and confirmed by the treaty or treaties of peace, according to the form and effect of the treaty of alliance with his most christian majesty; and you shall not agree to such treaty or treaties, unless the same be thereby assured and confirmed:—Although it is of the utmost importance to the peace and commerce of the United States, that Canada and Nova Scotia should be ceded, and more particularly that their equal common right to the fisheries should be guaranteed to them, yet a desire of terminating the war hath induced us not to make the acquisition of these objects an ultimatum on the present occasion:—You are empowered to agree to a cessation of hostilities during the negotiation, provided our ally shall consent to the same, and provided it shall be stipulated that all the forces of the enemy shall be immediately withdrawn from the United States:—In all other matters not above-mentioned, you are

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1779 are to govern yourself by the alliance between his most christian majesty and those states, by the advice of our allies, by your knowledge of our interests, and by your own discretion in which we repose the fullest confidence."

To Dr. Franklin the congress wrote—"Sir—Having determined that we would not insist on a direct acknowledgment by Great Britain of our right in the fisheries, this important matter is liable to an incertitude, which may be dangerous to the political and commercial interests of the United States, we have therefore agreed and resolved—that the common right of fishing shall in no case be given up;—and that if after a treaty of peace with Great Britain, she shall molest the citizens or inhabitants of any of the United States, in taking fish on the banks of Newfoundland and other fisheries in the American seas, any where excepting within the distance of three leagues of the shore of the territories remaining to Great Britain at the close of the war, such molestation (being in the opinion of congress a direct violation and breach of the peace) shall be a common cause of the said states, and the force of the union be exerted to obtain redress for the parties injured. But notwithstanding these precautions, as Great Britain may again light up the flames of war, and use our exercise of the fisheries as her pretext; and since some doubts may arise, whether this object is so effectually guarded by the treaty of alliance with his most christian majesty, that any molestation therein on the part of Great Britain, is to be considered as a *casus fœderis*; you are to endeavour to obtain of his majesty an explanation on that subject, upon the principle that notwithstanding the high confidence reposed in his wisdom and justice, yet considering the

the uncertainty of human affairs, and how doubts may¹⁷⁷⁹ be afterward raised in the breasts of his royal successors, the great importance of the fisheries renders the citizens of these states very solicitous to obtain his majesty's sense with relation to them, as the best security against the ambition of the British court. For this purpose you shall propose the following articles, in which nevertheless such alterations may be made as the circumstances and situation of affairs shall render convenient and proper. Should the same be agreed to and executed, you are immediately to transmit a copy thereof to our minister at the court of Spain."

"*Whereas* by the treaty of alliance between the most christian king and the United States of North America, the two parties guarantee mutually from that time and for ever against all other powers, to wit, the United States to his most christian majesty the possession then appertaining to the crown of France in America, as well as those which it may acquire by a future treaty of peace; and his most christian majesty guarantees on his part to the United States, all their liberty, sovereignty and independence, absolute and unlimited, as well in matters of government as commerce, and also their possessions and the additions or conquests that their confederation may obtain during the war, according to the said treaty:—And *whereas* the said parties did further agree and declare, that in case of a rupture between France and England, the said reciprocal guarantee should have its full force and effect the moment such war should break out:—And *whereas* doubts may hereafter arise how far the said guarantee extends to this case, to wit, that should Great Britain molest or disturb the subjects or inhabitants

1779 tants of France, or of the said states, in taking fish on the banks of Newfoundland, and other the fishing banks and seas of North America, formerly and usually frequented by the subjects and inhabitants respectively:— And *whereas* the said king and the United States have thought proper to determine with precision the true intent and meaning of the said guarantee in this respect, now therefore as a further demonstration of their mutual good will and affection, it is hereby agreed, concluded and determined as follows, to wit, That if after the conclusion of the treaty or treaties which shall terminate the present war, Great Britain shall molest or disturb the subjects or inhabitants of the said United States, in taking fish on the banks, seas and places, formerly used and frequented by them so as not to encroach on the territorial rights, which may remain to her after the termination of the present war as aforesaid, and war should thereupon break out between the said United States and Great Britain: or if Great Britain shall molest or disturb the subjects and inhabitants of France, in taking fish on the banks, seas and places formerly used and frequented by them, so as not to encroach on the territorial rights of Great Britain as aforesaid, and war shall thereupon break out between France and Great Britain; in either of these cases of war as aforesaid, his most christian majesty and the said United States shall make it a common cause, and aid each other mutually with their good offices, their councils and their forces, according to the exigence of conjunctures, as becomes good and faithful allies—*Provided* alway that nothing herein contained shall be taken or understood, as contrary to or inconsistent with the true intent and meaning of
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of the treaties already subsisting between his most christian majesty and the said states, but the same shall be taken and understood as explanatory of and conformable to those treaties."

The honorable Sieur Gerard, minister plenipotentiary Sept. of France, had a private audience of congress in order 179 to his taking leave of them; when he mentioned in his speech his majesty's having sent a new minister plenipotentiary to America, that there might be no interruption in his care to cultivate a mutual friendship, and that Mons. the chevalier de la Luzerne would explain to them his majesty's sentiments. The complimentary answer which followed of course need not be related. The day after, the following instructions to the minister plenipotentiary for negotiating with the court of Spain were prepared—"Sir—Congress have come to the following resolution, That if his catholic majesty shall accede to the treaties between France and the United States of America, and in concurrence with them continue the present war with Great Britain for the purpose expressed in the treaties aforesaid, he shall not thereby be precluded from securing to himself the Floridas: on the contrary, if he shall obtain the Floridas from Great Britain, these United States will guarantee the same to his catholic majesty; *provided* alway that the United States shall enjoy the free navigation of the river Mississippi into and from the sea. You are therefore to communicate to his most christian majesty, the desire of congress to enter into a treaty of alliance, and of amity and commerce, with his catholic majesty, and to request his favorable interposition for that purpose; at the same time you are to make such proposals to his catholic majesty as in
your

1779- your judgment, from the circumstances, will be proper for obtaining for the United States of America, equal advantages with those which are secured to them by the treaties with his most christian majesty, observing always the resolution aforesaid as the *ultimatum* of these United States. You are particularly to endeavour to obtain some convenient port or ports below the 31 of north latitude on the river Mississippi free for all merchant vessels, goods, wares and merchandise belonging to the inhabitants of these states. The distressed state of our finances, and the great depreciation of our paper money, incline congress to hope, that his catholic majesty, if he shall conclude a treaty with the states, will be induced to lend them money; you are therefore to represent to him the great distress of these states on that account, and to solicit a loan of five millions of dollars upon the best terms in your power, not exceeding six per cent. per ann. effectually to enable them to co-operate with the allies against the common enemy: but before you make any proposals to his catholic majesty for a loan, you are to endeavour to obtain a subsidy in consideration of the guarantee aforesaid.

Sept. 25. Saturday the 25th, it was resolved that congress proceed to the nomination of a proper person for negotiating a treaty of peace. Mr. John Adams and Mr. Jay were proposed; and an adjournment took place to ten o'clock of the next day, when the members balloted. The votes were divided, and there was no election. They balloted again, and it was the same: the balloting therefore was postponed, and congress resolved, that a minister plenipotentiary be appointed to negotiate a treaty of alliance, and of amity and commerce, be-

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tween the United States of America and his catholic ¹⁷⁷⁹ majesty. Mr. Arthur Lee, Mr. John Adams, and Mr. Jay, were nominated. On the Monday the ballots were taken, and Mr. Jay was elected. Then followed the choice by ballot of a minister plenipotentiary for negotiating a treaty of peace and a treaty of commerce with Great Britain, when Mr. John Adams was elected. This election was no ground of joy to Mr. Gerard. His wishes and interest were in favor of Mr. Jay's being appointed to negotiate with Great Britain; while the latter was wrongfully suspected by the New England delegates, as being in no wise strenuously disposed to secure the fisheries. These delegates were fixed upon having Mr. J. Adams intrusted with that business, as they could confide in his steady determination never to lose sight of it, whatever might be the pleas and pretences of politicians. They could acquiesce in Mr. Jay's election to negotiate with the court of Madrid, as it paved the way for the carrying of their main point. Two days after, Mr. William Carmichael was elected secretary to Mr. Jay; Mr. Francis Dana to Mr. Adams; and lieut. col. Laurens to Dr. Franklin. Mr. Jay's ^{Oct. 15.} letter of credence was signed at Philadelphia the 15th of October, when congress "resolved, That the following additional instructions be given to the minister plenipotentiary for negotiating with his catholic majesty—" Sir— You are to use your utmost endeavours for obtaining permission for the citizens and inhabitants of these states, to lade and take on board their vessels, salt at the island of Salt Tortuga; and also to cut, load and bring away, logwood and mahogany in and from the Bay of Honduras and its rivers, and to build on the shores, stores, houses

1779. houses and magazines for the wood cutters and their families, in the extent ceded to his Britannic majesty by the 17th article of the definitive treaty, concluded at Paris the 10th of February, 1763, or in as great extent as can be obtained." Before the month was out,

Oct. Mr. Jay sailed for Europe in company with Mr. Gerard.

21. October the 21st, the honorable Henry Laurens esq. was elected by ballot to negotiate a loan in Holland: on the 1st of the next month he was chosen to negotiate a treaty of amity and commerce with the united provinces of the low countries.

Sept. - September the 1st, congress resolved, that they would, 1. on no account, emit more bills of credit than to make the whole amount of them two hundred millions of dollars.

13. They addressed a long letter to their constituents upon their finances. By that it appears, that the taxes had brought into the treasury no more than 3,027,560 dollars, and that all the monies supplied by the people of America, amounted to no more than 36,761,665 dollars and 67-90ths, that being the sum of the loans and taxes then received. It holds up to the imagination, the ability of the United States to pay their whole national debt, though at the close of the war it should amount to three hundred millions of dollars, with ease in the course of twenty years; and while doing it, by inverse, romantic reasoning, represents the paper currency as a blessing at the expence of scripture language—
 "Let it also be remembered, that paper money is the only kind of money which cannot *make unto itself wings and fly away*: it remains with us, it will not forsake us, it is always ready and at hand for the purpose of commerce

merce and taxes, and every industrious man can find it." The letter proceeds to show, that the people not only collectively by their representatives, but individually, have pledged their faith for the redemption of their bills, and that they possess a political capacity of doing it. Then comes a question, "Whether there is any reason to apprehend a wanton violation of the public faith?" Congress say upon it—"It is with great regret and reluctance, that we can prevail upon ourselves to take the least notice of a question, which involves in it a doubt so injurious to the honor and dignity of America. We should pay an ill compliment to the understanding and honor of every true American, were we to adduce many arguments to show the baseness or bad policy of violating our national faith, or omitting to pursue the measures necessary to preserve it. A bankrupt faithless republic would be a novelty in the political world, and appear, among reputable nations, like a common prostitute among chaste and respectable matrons. We are convinced, that the efforts and arts of our enemies will not be wanting to draw us into this humiliating and contemptible situation. Impelled by malice, and the suggestions of chagrin and disappointment, at not being able to bend our necks to their yoke, they will endeavour to force or seduce us to commit this unpardonable sin, in order to subject us to the punishment due to it, and that we may thenceforth be a reproach and a by-word among the nations. Apprized of these consequences, knowing the value of national character, and impressed with a due sense of the immutable laws of justice and honor, it is impossible that America should think without horror of such an execrable

1779. erable deed. Determine to finish the contest as you began it, honestly and gloriously. Let it never be said, that America had no sooner become independent than she became insolvent; or that her infant glories and growing fame were obscured and tarnished by broken contracts and violated faith, in the very hour when all the nations of the earth were admiring, and almost adoring the splendor of her rising." This letter and the resolve preceding it, were probably occasioned by the prevailing subjects of conversation in Philadelphia, and the movements of the leading people. A town meeting was called, and a special committee appointed to draw up a memorial, which was signed by the president and council in their private characters, the speaker and several members of assembly, the general committee of the city, and a respectable number of citizens. It was presented to congress, on or near the day, when they addressed their constituents, and was meant to stop the further emissions of continental bills. The memorialists say—"Neither can we help expressing our apprehensions, that the ease with which money was thus procured, has induced a remissness of inquiries into the reality of its application: all which we hope will, in future, be remedied by a systematical plan of oeconomy, and a regular information of expences."

- Sept. Congress "resolved, That in consideration of the
 17. distinguished merit of lieut. col. Talbot (see p. 201) a commission of captain in the navy of the United States
 24. be given him." They "resolved, That a medal of gold, emblematical of the attack of the fort and works at Powle's-hook, be struck and presented to major Lee. Four days after, upon Mr. Jay's signifying to them his acceptance

acceptance of the office to which he had been appointed 1779.
 on the 26th, and thereupon resigning the chair, they
 elected Samuel Huntington esq. president. Such was
 the deficiency of flour in Virginia, that congress re- Oct.
 solved, that the governor should be informed of its being 18.
 their opinion, that the convention troops should be sup-
 plied with meal made of Indian corn. But he was re-
 quested to inform the commanding officer of those
 troops, that if the commander in chief of the British
 forces will order supplies of flour to be sent to Virginia,
 passports would be ordered for the purpose when applied
 for. The chevalier de la Luzerne had his audience of
 congress, delivered a letter from his most christian ma- Nov.
 jesty, was announced to the house, and upon that rose, 17.
 and addressed the congress in a speech, to which the
 president returned an answer.

Let us change the scene.

While count d'Estaing lay with his fleet at Cape
 Francois, after the conquest of Grenada, he received
 letters from gov. Rutledge, gen. Lincoln, the French
 consul at Charlestown and others, urging him to visit
 the American coast, and proposing an attack upon Sa-
 vannah. The general engaged to join him with 1000
 men certain; and promised, that every exertion would
 be made to augment the number. The application
 coinciding with the king's instructions, to act in con-
 cert with the forces of the United States, whenever an
 occasion presented itself, he sailed for the American
 continent within a few days after it was received. When
 through the windward passage, he dispatched two ships
 of the line and three frigates to Charlestown to announce
 his coming. On the 1st of September, he arrived with Sept.
 1.

1779. a fleet of 20 sail of the line, two of fifty guns, and eleven frigates. The appearance of the French fleet on the coasts of South Carolina and Georgia was so unexpected by the British, that the Experiment man of war, of 50 guns, Sir James Wallace commander, and three frigates were captured. No sooner was it known at Charlestown that the count was on the coast, than Lincoln marched with all expedition for Savannah with the troops under his command: orders were also given for the South Carolina and Georgia militia to rendezvous immediately near the same place. The British were equally diligent in preparing for their defence. Lieut. col. Cruger, who had a small command at Sunbury, and lieut. col. Maitland, who was in force at Beaufort, were ordered to Savannah. As the French frigates approached the bar, the Fowey and Rose, of 20 guns each, the Keppel and Germain armed vessels, retired toward the town. The battery on Tybee was destroyed. To prevent the French frigates getting too near, the Rose and Savannah armed ships, with four transports, were sunk in the channel. A boom was laid across it, and several small vessels were also sunk above the town. The seamen were appointed to different batteries. The marines were incorporated with the grenadiers of the 16th regiment; and great numbers were employed, both by day and night, in strengthening and extending the lines of defence. Count d'Estaing made repeated declarations, that he could not remain more than ten or fifteen days on shore: nevertheless, the fall of Savannah was considered as infallibly certain. Every aid was given from Charlestown, by sending small vessels to assist the French in their landing; but as the large ships of the fleet could

could not come near the shore, it was not effected till 1779 the 12th. Gen. Lincoln's troops were not far distant; but before they could join the French, the count summoned gen. Prevost to surrender to the arms of the king of France. Lincoln remonstrated to d'Estaing on his summoning Prevost to surrender to the arms of France *only*, while the Americans were acting in conjunction with him; the matter was soon settled, and the mode of all future negotiations amicably adjusted. Prevost returned a polite letter to the count, but declined surrendering on a general summons, without any specific terms; and mentioned, that if such were proposed, as he could with honor accept, he would then give his answer. The count in a second letter observed to him, that it was the part of the besieged to propose such terms as they might desire. Prevost upon that proposed a suspension of hostilities for 24 hours, as a just time absolutely necessary for deliberation and the discussion of various interests. The count's third letter, granting the said truce, was written toward evening. Thus time was gained for the arrival of the whole detachment from Beaufort. An enterprise was undertaken to prevent its joining the royal army in Savannah, which proved unsuccessful, from the pilots not undertaking to conduct to a proper station the frigates destined to intercept the communication. Maitland availed himself of this circumstance, and by his exertions joined Prevost with about 400 men before the count's second letter was received: at night and by noon the next day, all the remainder fit for duty arrived. The safe arrival of this detachment determined the garrison to risk an assault. The French and Americans were hereby reduced to the necessity of

- 1779 storming or besieging the garrison. The resolution of proceeding by siege being adopted, the attention of the combined armies was immediately called to the landing of cannon, and the erecting of batteries. The distance of the fleet from the landing-place, together with the want of proper carriages to transport the various warlike articles full five miles, consumed much time. The works of the town were, in the mean while, perfecting every day by the labor of several hundred negroes, directed by major Moncrieff the engineer. The French and Americans broke ground in the evening; a small party of the besieged sallied out the next day, but was soon repulsed. The pursuit was continued so near to the British intrenchments, that the French were exposed to a heavy fire, by which many of them fell. On the night of the 27th, major M'Arthur, with a party of the British picquets, advanced and fired among the besiegers so artfully, as to occasion a firing between the French and American camps. The besiegers opened with 9 mortars, 37 cannon from the land side, and 16 from the water; which continued to play for four or five days with short intervals, but without any considerable effect. Major l'Enfant in the morning, with five men, marched through a brisk fire from the British lines, and kindled the abbatis; but the dampness of the air, and the moisture of the green wood, prevented the success of this bold undertaking.

Soon after the commencement of the cannonade, gen. Prevost solicited for leave to send the women and children out of town. This humane request was refused from motives of policy. The combined army was so confident of success, that it was suspected a desire of secreting

1779.

secreting the plunder lately taken from the South-Carolinians, was a considerable object covered under the specious veil of humanity. That the commanders were suspicious, considering the stratagem Prevost had practised after being summoned, is not strange. It was also presumed, that a refusal would expedite a surrender. The period being long since elapsed which the count had assigned for his expedition, and the engineers informing him, that more time must be spent if he expected to reduce the garrison by regular approaches, it was determined to make an assault. This measure was forced on d'Eslaing by his naval officers, who had remonstrated against his continuing to risk so valuable a fleet in its present unrepai red condition, on such a dangerous coast in the hurricane season; and at so great a distance from the shore, that it might be surprised by a British fleet. These remonstrances were enforced by the probability of their being attacked by a British fleet completely repaired, with their full compliment of men, soldiers and artillery on board, when the ships of his most christian majesty were weakened by the absence of a considerable part of their crews, artillery and officers. In a few days, the lines of the besiegers might have been carried into the works of the besieged: but under these critical circumstances no further delay could be admitted. To assault, or to raise the siege, was the only alternative. Prudence dictated the latter: a sense of honor adopted the former. The morning of the 9th was fixed for the attack. The preceding night, one James Curry, formerly a clerk at Charlestown, but now sergeant major in their volunteer company, went into Savannah with a plan of the attack. Two feints were

made

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1779. made with the country militia; and a real attack a little before day light on the Spring-hill battery with 3500 French troops, 600 continentals, and 350 of the Charlestown militia, headed by count d'Estaing and gen. Lincoln. They marched up to the lines with great boldness: but a heavy and well-directed fire from the batteries, and a cross fire from the galleys threw the front of the column into confusion. Two standards however (one an American) were planted on the British redoubts, Count Pulaski, at the head of 200 horsemen, was in full gallop, riding into town between the redoubts, with an intention of charging in the rear, when he received a mortal wound. A general retreat of the assailants took place after they had stood the enemy's fire for fifty-five minutes. D'Estaing received two slight wounds; 637 of his troops, and 234 * continentals were killed or wounded: of the 350 Charlestown militia, who were in the hottest of the fire, 6 were wounded, and a captain killed. Gen. Prevost and major Moncrieff have deservedly acquired great reputation by this successful defence. There were not ten guns mounted on the lines on the day of the summons, and in a few days the number exceeded 80. The garrison was between 2 and 3000, including 150 militia. The damage it sustained was trifling, as the men fired under cover, and few of the assailants fired at all. It lost no other officer than capt. Taws, who defended the redoubt where the standards were planted, with the greatest bravery. Instead of mutual reproaches, which too often follow the failure of enterprises, depending upon the co-operation of different nations, the French and Americans had their con-

* The returns made to general Lincoln,

fidence in and esteem for each other increased. It was ¹⁷⁷⁹ thought, that the delicacy and propriety of gen. Lincoln's conduct on every occasion, contributed much to this agreeable circumstance. The militia almost universally returned home, immediately after the unsuccessful assault. In about ten days, count d'Estaing embarked his troops, artillery and baggage, and left the continent; while gen. Lincoln returned to South Carolina. But the French were scarcely on board, when a violent gale dispersed the whole fleet; and though the count had ordered seven ships to repair to Hampton road in the Chesapeake, the marquis de Vaudreuil was the only officer who was able to execute a part of the order.

While the siege of Savannah was pending, a remarkable enterprise was effected by col. John White of the Georgia line. Previous to the arrival of d'Estaing on the coast of Georgia, a captain of Delancey's 1st battalion had taken post with about 100 American royal regulars near the river Ogeechee, about 25 miles from Savannah. There were also at the same place five British vessels, four of which were armed, the largest with 14 guns, the smallest with 4, and the whole manned with about 40 sailors. Col. White, with six volunteers, including his own servant, made them all prisoners. On September the 30th, at eleven o'clock at night, he kindled a number of fires in different places, adopted the parade of a large encampment, practised a variety of other stratagems, and summoned the captain to surrender; who was so fully impressed with an opinion, that nothing but an instant compliance could save his men from being cut in pieces by a superior force, that he made no defence. The deception was carried on with
such

such address, that all the prisoners, amounting to 141, were secured*, and afterward safely conducted by three of the captors for 25 miles through the country to an American post†.

Count Pulaski died before the end of October. Congress have resolved, that a monument should be erected to his memory. He was a Poland of high birth, and had been concerned in a bold enterprise in his native country. With a few men he had carried off king Stanislaus from the middle of his capital, though surrounded by a numerous body of guards and a Russian army. The king, after being a prisoner for some time, escaped by the favor of one of the band, and soon afterward declared Pulaski an out-law. Nothing could be more congenial to his sentiments than to employ his arms in support of the American states. He offered his service to congress, and was honored with the rank of a brigadier general. But the count was far from being satisfied with his employ, as appears from his letter, dated Charlestown, Aug. 19, in which he wrote—"Such has been my lot, that nothing less than my honor, which I will never forfeit, retains me in a service, which ill-treatment makes me begin to abhor. Every proceeding respecting myself has been so thoroughly mortifying, that nothing but the integrity of my heart, and the fervency of my zeal, supports me under it."

Let us turn to New York.

It was not till August the 25th, that adm. Arbuthnot arrived with the fleet, which conveyed the reinforcements, camp equipage, stores and other necessaries, that

* General Lincoln's Letter of October the 2d, to gov. Rutledge.

† Dr. Ramsay's History, vol. ii. p. 35—43.

were to enable Sir Henry Clinton to act with suitable vigor. The 21st of September Sir Andrew Hammond arrived with an additional force of 1500 men from Corke. These several arrivals however, did not make the British at New York easy, when they had the news of count d'Estaing's being on the American coast. The intelligence occasioned an apprehension of a formidable attack by sea and land, supposed to have been concerted between the count and gen. Washington, and defensive measures were thought of. Beside adopting every other mean of a vigorous defence, transports were dispatched to Rhode Island to bring off the garrison. All things being in readiness, the royal troops evacuated Newport on the 25th of October; embarked in the evening, sailed at night, and reached New York on the 27th. They were in sufficient force while at Newport, to have made predatory excursions, and to have done much mischief; notwithstanding the troops that gen. Gates, who was stationed at Providence, had under his command. But gen. Sir Robert Pigot's humanity might revolt at such barbarous expeditions; which is the more probable, from the strict and positive orders he gave for the observance of the most exact regularity and discipline during the evacuation. As it was universally known that he meant to be obeyed, so obedience was as universally practised. The men were no wise chargeable at their quitting the island, with any wanton cruelties, or needless destruction, or with an unjust seizure of property. However, as gen. Gates could not know but that

* This is the substance of what was related to me by disinterested persons at Newport and the neighbourhood, some short time after the evacuation.

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1779 military commands might require Sir Robert Pigot to ravage the country to the extent of his power; he secured to himself the mean of gaining the earliest intelligence of every capital movement upon the island, by the aid of lieut. Seth Chapin. The lieutenant employed a trusty woman living at Newport to write down all the information she could procure. A certain place in a rock near the water side was agreed upon, where the written intelligence was put. The woman had her particular signals; and by putting up poles or sticks as though only drying linen, and making a show of such business in a certain way, notified to the lieutenant on the other side of the water, that there was some special matter to be communicated. At night the lieutenant passed over in his boat from Little Compton, landed and brought it away. Through this settled correspondence, Gates learnt the next day what were the movements and talk of the enemy. After the evacuation, the general desired the lieutenant to mention what consideration would satisfy him for the dangerous service in which he had been engaged. The answer was, "I shall be fully satisfied with 1200 dollars for myself, and 2 or 300 for some others that were concerned." Such was the depreciation then, that the whole 1500 were not worth 75 hard dollars, now they are worth about 30.

Sir H. Clinton having received certain intelligence of the repulse given the combined troops in their attack on Savannah, resumed the plan of an expedition against South Carolina, which the appearance of count d'Estaing obliged him to suspend. Every thing was prepared, and about 7000 troops were embarked, but detained till he had full assurance of the French fleet's having wholly

wholly quitted the American coast, when they failed 1779.
under the convoy of adm. Arbuthnot, on the 26th of
December. Their operations will be related in a future
letter. Congress having obtained satisfactory evidence
of what was in contemplation, had ordered on the 10th
of November, three of the continental frigates to Charlestown for its defence.

On the 19th of November, they resolved that it be Nov.
earnestly recommended to the several states forthwith, 19.
to enact laws for establishing and carrying into execution
a general limitation of prices throughout their respective
jurisdictions, on certain prescribed principles, the operation
to commence from the 1st of next February—by
which time the operation may be found to be impossible.
They concluded on the 23d, that bills of ex- 23.
change be drawn on Mr. Jay for 100,000l. sterling, and
on Mr. Laurens for 100,000l. payable at six months
sight, and the same to be sold at the current rate of exchange.
They after that directed the committee of 29.
foreign affairs to write to Messrs. Jay and Laurens, informing
them of the drafts to be made upon them, explaining fully
the reasons that urge congress to draw, and directing them
to keep up a mutual correspondence, and to afford each other
every assistance in procuring money to pay the bills.
A committee of seven having been appointed by congress to wait on the minister of
France, and to receive his communications, reported Dec.
the following extracts and summary of the communications. 16.
—That the minister of France had it in command from his king,
to impress on the minds of congress—That the British cabinet
have an almost insuperable reluctance to admit the idea of the independence of these

United

1779. United States, and will use every possible endeavour to prevent it:—That they have filled several of the courts of Europe with negotiations, in order to excite them to a war against France, or to obtain succours, and are employing the most strenuous endeavours to persuade the several powers, that the United States are disposed to enter into treaties of accommodation; that many persons in America are actually employed in bringing such treaties to perfection; and that they have no doubt of their success:—That the objects which the British cabinet hope for from these measures are, to destroy the superiority which France has now at sea, by diverting her powers and resources from naval to land operations, and by engaging her in a land war, where she must risk very important interests, while England would risk nothing but money; or to break or weaken the alliance by destroying the confidence, which the allies ought to have in each other:—That his most christian majesty gives no credit to the suggestions of Britain relative to the dispositions of the United States, and that it is necessary that measures be taken for the preventing of other powers from being deceived into a belief of them:—That the negotiation of Britain, as far as could yet be learned, had not succeeded:—That the dispositions of all the European powers are, as far as can be known, very friendly to France, but some of them may be engaged in secret treaties with Britain, which may oblige them in some event to assist her with troops, even against their inclinations;—That such event may arise, and if it should, it is probable it will produce an armed mediation, the consequences of which would be, that the allies must accept of the terms proposed by the mediation,

ation, or continue the war under the disadvantages of 1779. having the forces of the mediator united with those of their enemies:—That in such event, it is possible the terms proposed will be such as Spain offered, and Britain rejected on the last proposed mediation:—That though the powers, who may be under such engagements by treaties to Great Britain, from their friendly disposition toward his most christian majesty, may be very unwilling to give assistance to his enemies, yet they may find it indispensably necessary in compliance with their engagements: but it is not improbable that their reluctance, or the distance of their dominions, may delay such assistance, if granted at all, so as to be too late for the next campaign:—That should the enemy be in possession of any part of the United States at the close of the next campaign, it will be extremely difficult to Great Britain to acknowledge their independence; and if a mediation should be offered while the enemy are in possession of any part, an impartial mediator could not easily refute the arguments which might be used for his retaining such possessions; and probably a mediator well disposed toward Great Britain might insist on her holding them, and if not agreed to, the hostility of such mediator would be the necessary consequence:—That should Great Britain form such alliances, or procure such aids as are the objects of her present negotiations, there will be every reason to fear a long and an obstinate war, whereof the final event may be doubtful:—That the view of affairs plainly points out, the necessity for the greatest possible vigor in the operations of the next campaign, in order to dispossess the enemy of every part of the United States, and to put them in

1779 condition to treat of peace and accept of mediation, with the greatest advantage; and the preparations for it ought to be as speedy and as effectual as possible:—That France and Spain are prepared to make a very powerful diversion, and will exert themselves most strenuously for preserving their naval superiority, and for employing the powers of the enemy in Europe and the West Indies. —The minister declared as from himself—That he doubted not but his most christian majesty will spare some ships to the United States, if it can be done without endangering his superiority at sea, and that an application made to the minister in form is more eligible than to the king; because it would give his majesty great pain to refuse the request, though he might be in no condition to grant it:—That at all events supplies should be prepared on a supposition that the ships will be granted, and such supplies should be put into the hands of the agent for the marine of France, and be considered as the king's property.—He desires to be informed, as far as congress deem proper, what force the United States can bring into the field the next campaign? On what resources they rely for their maintenance and necessary appointments, and what shall be the general plan of the campaign, on supposition either of having or not having the aid of ships of war?—He gives it as his opinion, that an application for clothing may be made to his most christian majesty with prospect of success; and although measures have been taken for sending arms and warlike stores to America, yet it would be prudent in congress not to neglect any other means for procuring either those supplies, or supplies of clothing.

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Congress to promote œconomy in purchases of American produce, resolved on the 14th of December, to call upon the states for the necessary supplies, for which they are to be credited at equal prices for articles of the same quality and kind, and for others which they may furnish in due proportion.

I shall conclude with mentioning in a general way, that the American cruisers have continued to be very successful:—And that about the middle of September, the French plenipotentiary, in a conversation with gen. Washington mentioned, that though Spain had been all along well disposed to the revolution, she had entered reluctantly into the war, and had not acknowledged the independence of the United States; and that France desired to engage Spain more firmly in their interests, by a *mark* of their good will to her. [The *mark* in view is the lands on the eastern side of the Mississippi; which is an affair that the general leaves to the wisdom of congress.]

LETTER XI.

Roxbury, Aug. 24, 1780.

CONGRESS resolved, “that the following answer be given to the communications of the minister of France—That congress entertain the most grateful sense of the unremitting attention given to the

1780. interests of the United States by their illustrious ally, and consider the communications made to them by his minister under his majesty's special command, as equally wise and interesting:—That the confidence which they repose in his majesty, in consequence of his so generously interesting himself in the affairs of these United States, and of the wisdom and magnanimity of his councils, determine them to give the most perfect information in their power of their resources, their views and their expectations: That to this end they state as follows—That the United States have expectations, on which they can rely with confidence, of bringing into the field next campaign an army of 25,000 effective men, exclusive of commissioned officers:—That this army can be reinforced by militia, so as to be in force sufficient for any enterprise against the posts occupied by the enemy within the United States:—That supplies of provision for the army in its greatest number, can certainly be obtained within the United States, and the congress, with the co-operation of the several states, can take effectual measures for procuring them in such manner, as that no operation will be impeded;—That provisions also for such of the forces of his most christian majesty, as may be employed in conjunction or co-operation with those of the United States, can be procured under the direction of congress; and such provisions shall be laid up in magazines, agreeable to such instructions as his majesty's minister plenipotentiary shall give; and the magazines shall be put under the direction of the agent of the marine of France:—That congress rely on the contributions of the states by taxes, and on monies to be raised by internal loans for the pay of the army:—That
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supplies of clothing, of tents, of arms and warlike stores, must be principally obtained from foreign nations, and the United States must rely chiefly on the assistance of their ally for them; but every other mean for procuring them is already taken, and will be prosecuted with the greatest diligence:—That the United States, with the assistance of a competent naval force, would willingly, during the next campaign, carry on the most vigorous offensive operations against the enemy in all the posts occupied by them within the United States:—That without such naval force, little more can be attempted by them, than straitening the quarters of the enemy, and covering the interior parts of the country:—That their forces must be disposed in such manner as to oppose the enemy with greatest effect, wheresoever their most considerable operations may be directed:—That at present the southern states seem to be their principal object; and their design, to establish themselves in one or more of them: but their superiority at sea over the United States, enables them to change their object and operations with great facility, while those of the United States are rendered difficult by the great extent of country they have to defend:—That congress are happy to find that his most christian majesty gives no credit to the suggestions of the British cabinet, relative to the dispositions of the United States, or any of them, to enter into treaties of accommodation with Great Britain; and wish his majesty and all the powers of Europe to be assured, that such suggestions are insidious and without foundation:—That it will appear by the constitutions and other public acts of the several states, that the citizens of the United States, possessed of arms,

1780. possessed of freedom, possessed of political power to create and direct their magistrates as they think proper, are united in their determinations, to secure to themselves and their posterity the blessings of liberty, by supporting the independence of their governments, and observing their treaties and public engagements with immoveable firmness and fidelity; and the congress assure his majesty, that should any individual in America be found base enough to show the least disposition for persuading the people to the contrary, such individual would instantly lose all power of effecting his purpose, by forfeiting the confidence and esteem of the people."

Feb. 2. The committee appointed to receive the communications from the minister of France, reported, that on their second conference, he communicated to them—
 "That his most christian majesty being informed of the appointment of a minister plenipotentiary, to treat of an alliance between the United States and his catholic majesty, had signified to his minister plenipotentiary to these United States, that he wishes most earnestly for such an alliance, and in order to make the way thereto more easy, commanded him to communicate to congress certain articles, which his catholic majesty deems of great importance to the interests of his crown, and on which it is highly necessary that these United States explain themselves with such precision and moderation as may consist with their essential rights:—That the articles are,
 1. a precise and invariable boundary to the United States—2. the exclusive navigation of the river Mississippi—3. the possession of the Floridas—4. the lands on the left or eastern side of the Mississippi:—That on the 1st article, it is the idea of the cabinet of Madrid, that the
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United States extend to the westward no further than 1780, the settlements were permitted by the royal proclamation, bearing date the day of 1763: That on the 2d, the United States do not consider themselves as having right to navigate the river Mississippi, no territory belonging to them being situate thereon: That on the 3d, it is probable the king of Spain will conquer the Floridas during the course of the present war, and in such event every cause of dispute relative thereto, between Spain and these United States, ought to be removed: That on the 4th, the lands lying on the east side of the Mississippi, whereon the settlements were prohibited by the said proclamation, are possessions of the crown of Great Britain, and proper objects against which the arms of Spain may be employed for the purpose of making a permanent conquest for the Spanish crown; that such conquest may be made probably during the present war; that therefore it would be advisable to restrain the southern states from making any settlements or conquests in these territories: that the council of Madrid consider the United States as having no claims to these territories, either as not having had possession of them before the present war, or not having any foundation for a claim in the right of the sovereign of Great Britain, whose dominion they have abjured:— That his most christian majesty, united to the catholic king by blood, and by the strictest alliances, and united with these states in treaties of alliance, and feeling toward them dispositions of the most perfect friendship, is exceedingly desirous of conciliating between his catholic majesty and the United States the most happy and lasting friendship:— That the United States may repose the

1780. utmost confidence in his good will to their interests, and in the justice and liberality of his catholic majesty:—and That he cannot deem the revolution which has set up the independence of these United States, as past all danger of unfavorable events, until his catholic majesty and the said states shall be established on those terms of confidence and amity, which are the objects of his most christian majesty's very earnest wishes."

Jan.
8.

The information you are now entering upon, may appear singular after reading the answer of congress to the minister of France, on the article of provision. In the middle of December, a part of gen. Washington's army was several days without bread; and for the rest he had not, either on the spot or within reach, a supply sufficient for four days. Reckoning back from January the 8th, and both officers and men were almost perishing through want for a fortnight. The deficiency proceeded from the absolute emptiness of the American magazines in every place, and the total want of money or credit to replenish them. So that the general was obliged to call upon the magistrates of the Jersey state; to expose his situation to them; and to declare in plain terms, that he and his army were reduced to the alternative of disbanding or catering for themselves, unless the inhabitants would afford them aid. He allotted to each county a certain proportion of flour or grain, and a certain number of cattle to be delivered on certain days. To the honor of the magistrates and the good disposition of the people, be it added, that his requisitions were punctually complied with, and in many counties exceeded. Nothing but this great and patriotic exertion, which claims the particular consideration, and the

the warmest acknowledgments of the public, could have ^{1780.} saved the army from dissolution or starving, as the troops were bereft of every hope from the commissaries. At one time the soldiers eat every kind of horse food but hay: buck wheat, common wheat, rye and Indian corn, formed the composition of the meal that made their bread. As an army they bore it with heroic patience: but such sufferings, accompanied with the want of clothes, blankets, &c. produced frequent desertions, though not a single mutiny*. Would you have expected, that the commander in chief should have been under the necessity of inserting in general orders of January the 29th—
 “The general is astonished and mortified, that notwithstanding the last order, the inhabitants in the vicinity of the camp are absolutely a prey to the plundering and licentious spirit of the soldiery. From daily complaints, and a formal representation of the magistrates, a night scarcely passes without gangs of soldiers going out of camp, and committing every species of robbery, depredation, and the grossest personal insults. These violences are committed on the property and persons of those, who, on a very late alarming occasion for the want of provision, manifested the warmest attachment to the army, by affording it the most generous and plentiful relief.”

Congress have given the public a state of the expenditures for the last year. The sums advanced to exchange bills of the emissions of May 20, 1777, and April 11, 1778, were 15,323,897½ dollars. No more than five millions are specified in their journals for each of such dates. There must therefore have been issued

* General Washington's letters of January and February.

from

1780. from their own presses more than five millions and a half beyond what was specified, or their agents who were to exchange the genuine ones, had not the means of detecting the counterfeits; the last is scarce conceivable. They have also settled a small pension on an Elizabeth Bengin, late an inhabitant of New York, who was indefatigable in relieving the American prisoners, and in facilitating their escape. The British at length suspected, or had proof of her conduct, and sent a party to secure her. She begged leave to dress herself before she was carried to the commander, and withdrew to an adjoining room, from whence she made her escape to a friend, and lay secreted till an opportunity offered of quitting the city. She had a trusty waterman acting in concert with her, who in dark nights safely conveyed away by the help of muffled oars, the officers and privates whom her friendship had concealed. When she had gotten clear off, her circumstances were so distressing, that gen. Washington hearing of it, and knowing the part she had taken, and the risk she had run, recommended her to congress.

Sir H. Clinton's expedition to South Carolina is next to be considered. Though the fleet and convoy sailed from New York on the 26th of December, they did not arrive at Savannah till the end of January. The voyage was also very unprosperous. Through the tempestuousness of the weather, great mischief was done among the transports and victuallers. Several were lost, others damaged, and a few taken by the Americans. An ordnance ship went down with all her stores; and most of the horses, whether for draught, or appertaining to the cavalry, were lost. Various delays prevented, so

that

that the troops did not land before the 11th of February, 1780. on the south part of John's island, about 30 miles distant from Charlestown. A week before, gen. Lincoln had dispatched lieut. col. Ternant to the Havannah, with solicitations to the Spanish governor to contribute his assistance against the British. The colonel was authorized to promise 2000 men to co-operate with the Spaniards in reducing St. Augustine, if they would lend a sufficient force of ships and troops for the defence of Charlestown. The South Carolina assembly was sitting when the British landed, and directly delegated, till ten days after the next session, to gov. Rutledge, and such of his council as he could conveniently consult, a power to do every thing necessary for the public good, except the taking away the life of a citizen without a legal trial; and then adjourned. The governor immediately ordered the militia to rendezvous. Though the necessity was great, few obeyed the pressing call. A proclamation was soon issued, requiring the militia that were regularly draughted, and all the inhabitants and owners of property in the town, to repair to the American standard, and join the garrison without delay, under pain of confiscation. This severe measure produced little effect. The country was greatly dispirited, through the repulse at Savannah the preceding October, and the high ideas which that had produced of the power of Britain; and had Sir H. Clinton pushed at once for the town, he would probably have possessed himself of it in four days after landing: but his caution put him upon proceeding by a regular attack. Previous to the debarkation of his troops, he had taken care to have the harbour blocked up, so that had the Americans evacuated the place, they

1780. they must have given up not only their ships, but their baggage, field artillery and stores, as they could not have procured a number of waggons sufficient for the transportation of the same. It was the wish of the inhabitants to save their capital, and they were in hopes of effecting it. Gen. Lincoln was desirous of their being gratified, and acted accordingly. Though he had then but about 1400 continentals fit for duty, including those of South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia, together with about 1000 North Carolina militia; yet as he had been assured of succours to complete his force to near 10,000, he promised himself, that when further opposition could no longer avail, an evacuation would be practicable. The apparent design of Sir Henry Clinton to risk nothing, induced him to proceed slowly. He formed a depôt on James island, and erected fortifications there and on the main, opposite to the southern and western extremities of the town. On Mar. 29. the 29th of March, his grenadiers, light troops, and two battalions of infantry, crossed Ashley river: and on the next day appeared before the American lines, and encamped about 3000 yards in front of them. The works thrown up in the spring of 1779, had been strengthened and extended: and lines of defence and redoubts continued across Charlestown neck from Cooper to Ashley river. Gen. Lincoln had early pressed upon the state, the certainty of an intended invasion, and the necessity of strenuous and timely exertions to provide against it. He ever turned out himself, not only to assist on the works, but to set an example of emulation, that no one might think it beneath him to give his assistance. This was his constant practice, going out with the foremost in the morning, and returning with the last in the evening;

ing; until the near approach of the enemy called him ^{1780.} to other duties. In front of the lines was a strong ab-batis, and a wet ditch picquetted on the nearest side. Between the ab-batis and the lines, deep holes were dug at short distances from each other. The lines were made particularly strong on the right and left, and so constructed as to rake the wet ditch, in almost its whole extent. In the centre a strong citadel was erected. Works were thrown up on all sides of the town where a landing was practicable. That gen. Lincoln did not oppose the enemy's crossing the river, was owing to his not having sufficient force; his whole strength at that time amounted only to 2225, beside the sailors in the batteries. It was found upon examination, that the ships meant for the defence of Charlestown, could not possibly be so stationed as to defend the bar; and that the enemy, with a leading easterly wind and flood making in, would enter the harbour, and under full sail, pass the continental frigates lying in Five Fathom Hole. Commodore Whipple therefore, with his small fleet, consisting of the Bricole of 44 guns, the Providence and Boston each of 32, the Queen of France of 28, L'Avanture and the Truite each of 26, the Ranger and brig Gen. Lincoln each of 20, and the brig Notre Dame of 16 guns, abandoned the defence of the bar, and retreated to fort Moultrie. On the 20th of March, adm. Arbuthnot, with the Renown of 50 guns, the Romulus and Roebuck each of 44, the Richmond, Le Blonde and Raleigh each of 32, and the Sandwich armed ships, crossed the bar in front of Rebellion road, and anchored in Five Fathom Hole. The American fleet retreated to Charlestown: and the crews and guns of all the vessels, except

1780. except the *Ranger*, were put on shore to reinforce the batteries. An inquiry should have been made before the British fleet appeared off the harbour, whether the American ships could defend the bar, and upon the discovery of their incapability, they should have been sent away in time. When the captains and pilots, in their joint letter of February the 27th to gen. Lincoln, assigned such incapability as a reason for their abandoning the defence of it, the resolution should have been taken to evacuate Charlestown, and to retreat into the open country, and there wait for reinforcements, without running the risk of being completely invested by the enemy.

April
1.

It appeared that the British had broken ground in several places about 1100 yards in front of the Americans. Though the lines were no more than field works, yet Sir H. Clinton treated them with the respectful homage of three parallels, and made his advances with the greatest circumspection. By the 10th, the first parallel was completed, and directly upon it the town was summoned to surrender without effect. The same day 700 continentals, under gen. Woodford, who had marched 500 miles in 28 days, arrived in Charlestown. But while the siege was pending, near the same number of North Carolina militia, quitted the lines and went off, the time of their service being expired. The day before the summons, adm. Arbuthnot weighed anchor, and taking advantage of a strong southerly wind and flowing tide, passed fort Moultrie; which kept up a brisk and severe fire on the ships in their passage, and did them some damage beside killing or wounding 27 seamen. A transport ran aground, and was burnt by the crew.

The

The royal fleet anchored within long shot of the town 1780 batteries. To prevent the ships running up Cooper river, from which they might have enfiladed the lines, eleven vessels were sunk in the channel. The Ranger frigate and two galleys were stationed so as to co-operate with the batteries on shore, in defending these obstructions, and to attack any armed vessels that might attempt a passage through Hog-island channel.

On the 12th the British opened their batteries, and a 12. constant fire was kept up between both parties until the 20th, when their second parallel, within 300 yards of the American lines, was completed. But the fire of the besiegers was far superior to that of the besieged. The former had the advantage of 21 mortars and royals; the latter only of two, and by the 20th their lines had sustained great damage in many places. About the time the British opened their batteries, gov. Rutledge took post in the country between the Cooper and the Santee rivers: a work was ordered to be thrown up on the Wando, nine miles from town, and another at the point of Lampriere's, to preserve the communication with the country by water: a post was also ordered at a ferry over the Santee, to collect and secure the boats necessary for the crossing over of the expected succours with dispatch, and for effecting a retreat with facility when requisite.

For a few moments the narrative must be retrospective. The horses destined to mount the British cavalry were lost on the passage from New York. When lieut. col. Tarleton was landed, he soon obtained a fresh supply; and having mounted his cavalry, joined a body of about 1000 men, who marched through the country from Savannah. On the 18th of March a detachment from

1780. his corps surprised about 80 American militia, killed and wounded several, and dispersed the remainder. Five days after, Tarleton with his legion, fell in with another small party of mounted militia, who instantly retreated; but in the pursuit three were killed, one wounded, and four taken prisoners. On the 27th he had a rencounter with lieut. col. Washington, at the head of his regular corps of horse. The Americans had the advantage, took seven prisoners, and drove back the cavalry of the British legion; but durst not pursue them for want of infantry. At the beginning of the siege, gen. Lincoln ordered the 300 regular cavalry to keep the field, and the country militia were to act as infantry in their support. On various pretences the militia refused to attach themselves to the cavalry. The American body of horse, intended to cover the country, and to preserve the communication between that and the town, was surprised at Monk's Corner, by a strong party of British, led by lieut. cols. Tarleton and Webster. A negro slave, for a sum of money, conducted the British from Goose-creek, in the night, through unfrequented paths. Although the commanding officer of the American cavalry had taken the precaution of having his horses saddled and bridled, and the alarm was given by his videttes, posted at the distance of a mile in front; yet, being entirely unsupported by infantry, the British advanced so rapidly, notwithstanding the opposition of the advanced guard, that they began their attack upon the main body before the men could put themselves in a posture of defence. About twenty-five were killed or taken: and they that escaped were obliged for several days to conceal themselves in the swamps. The British instantly fell down

down on the peninsula between the Cooper and the Santee with about 250 horse and 600 infantry. When gen. Lincoln was informed on the 16th of what had happened, he called a council of war, who were of opinion, that the weak state of the garrison made it improper to detach a number sufficient to attack this separate corps. On the 18th Sir H. Clinton received a reinforcement of 3000 men from New York. The only practicable route of an evacuation for the Americans was to the right of the town; but the besiegers, with their reinforcement, strengthened the troops on the peninsula, and took post on Haddrell's point; which obliged the others to abandon Lampriere's. On the 20th and 21st, another council of war was held; to determine upon the measures that the interest and safety of the country called the American officers to pursue under their present circumstances. The result was—"As a retreat would be attended with many distressing inconveniences, if not altogether impracticable for the undermentioned causes, to wit,—1. the civil authority is averse to it, and intimated in council, that if attempted, they would counteract the measure:—2. it must be performed in face of the enemy, much superior, across a river three miles broad, in large ships and vessels, the moving of which must be regulated by the wind and tide:—3. could these obstacles be surmounted, we must force our way through a considerable body of the enemy, in full possession of the passes on our route to the Santee, the only road by which we can retreat:—4. supposing us arrived at that river, new and dangerous difficulties are again to be encountered, from the want of boats to cross it, with an army wasted and worn down by action, fatigue and

1780. famine, and closely pursued by the enemy—we advise therefore, that offers of capitulation, before our affairs become more critical, should be made to gen. Clinton, which may admit of the army's withdrawing, and afford security to the persons and property of the inhabitants"—signed William Moultrie and others. The terms when proposed, were instantly rejected: but still not receded from by the proposers, as they had hopes of succours to open the communication, and give an opportunity of retreating. Though the rejection of the terms dispirited the garrison, yet they thought, by delaying as long as possible, the people in the neighbouring states would have an opportunity to rouse and imbody. On the 23d April the British commenced their third parallel from 80 to 150 yards from the British lines. The next day the besieged made a sally, which was conducted by lieut. col. Henderson, who led out 200 men, and attacked the advanced working party of the British, killed several and took eleven prisoners. This was the only sally made by them, for their inferior numbers would not admit of their engaging repeatedly in such services. On the 26th the propriety of attempting a retreat came again before a council of officers, who were unanimously of opinion, that it was not expedient as a retreat was impracticable. While gen. Lincoln was pressed with a variety of difficulties, the British flag was seen flying on fort Moultrie. When the royal ships had passed Sullivan's island, col. Pinkney, with about 150 men under his command, was withdrawn from that post, to reinforce the army in Charlestown. The feeble remainder of the garrison, mostly militia, surrendered on the 6th of May to capt. May Hudson of the British navy, without firing a gun. The same

same day the third parallel was completed close to the^{1780.} edge of the American canal, and a sap carried to the dam, which contained its water on the right, by which mean a great part was drained to the bottom. On that day also col. Anthony Walton White, who had taken the command of the remains of the American cavalry after their defeat, experienced a similar disaster. He had crossed the Santee, and on that day made prisoners a small British party, that was conducted to Lanneau's ferry. He had ordered in season proper persons to collect boats, and to assemble a body of infantry at this place, to cover the American cavalry in their recrossing the Santee, which had not been carried into execution. The zeal of a new subject, who had lately submitted to the royal army, led him to give immediate notice to lord Cornwallis of White's situation. Tarleton, with a party of horse, was dispatched to the ferry; arrived there a few minutes after the American cavalry; and instantly charged them with a superior force. From the want of boats and of infantry, a retreat was impracticable, and resistance unavailing. A rout took place. Major Call and seven others escaped on horseback, by urging their way through the advancing British cavalry. Lieut. col. Washington, major Jameson, and five or six privates, saved themselves by swimming across the Santee. About 30 were killed, wounded or taken. The remainder got off by concealing themselves in the swamps. The British prisoners, who were in a boat crossing the river, being called upon by their friends to come back, rose on their guard, and were released. On the eighth Sir H. Clinton began a correspondence with gen. Lincoln, and repeated his former terms and sum-

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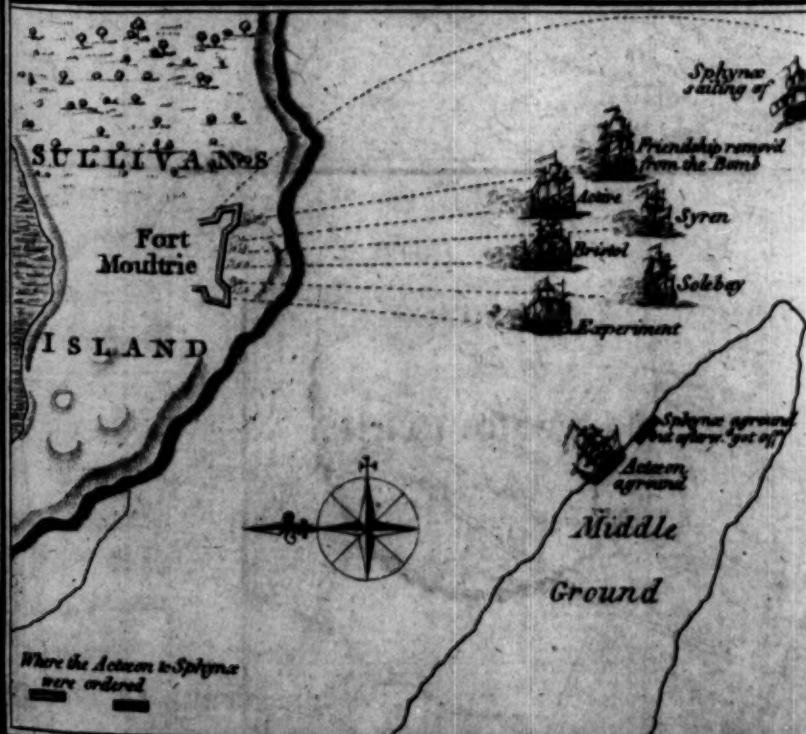
1780. mons. At this time, all the flesh-provisions of the garrison were not sufficient to furnish rations for a week. There was no prospect either of reinforcements or of supplies from the country. The engineers gave it as their opinion, that the lines could not be defended ten days longer, and that they might at any time be carried by assault in ten minutes. Gen. Lincoln was disposed to close with the terms offered, as far as they respected his army; but some demur was made in behalf of the citizens. Sir H. Clinton insisted on their being all prisoners on parole, and would promise nothing further, than that the town-property of those within the lines should not be molested by the British troops. He also evaded any determinate answer to the article which requested leave for those who did not choose to submit to the British government, to sell their estates and leave the province. It was hoped, that upon a proper representation of matters in a free conference, the generosity of the besiegers would soften their demands; the same was therefore asked by gen. Lincoln, without his directly refusing what was offered. Contrary to the expectation of the besieged, an answer was returned, that hostilities should recommence at eight o'clock. When the hour arrived, the most vigorous onset of the besiegers was immediately expected by the garrison. But neither army fired a gun for some time. Both seemed to dread the consequences of an assault, and to wish for a continuance of the truce, and a reconsideration of the proposed articles. At nine, firing commenced from the garrison, and was kept up on both sides for several hours with unusual briskness, and did more execution than had taken place in the same length of time since the commencement

mencement of the siege. The British batteries of the 1780.
third parallel, which were ready on the 6th, opened on
this occasion. Shells and carcasses were thrown incessantly
into almost all parts of the town; and several houses
burnt. Beside the cannon and mortars which played on
the garrison at a less distance than a hundred yards, rifles
were fired by the Hessian chasseurs with such effect, that
very few escaped who showed themselves above the lines. May
The British advanced within twenty-five yards of the 11.
same, having crossed the wet ditch by sap; and com-
menced their preparations for making a general assault
by sea and land. The principal inhabitants of the town,
and a number of the country militia, now addressed
gen. Lincoln; signified to him, that the terms which
Sir H. Clinton had offered, so far as they related to
them, were satisfactory; and requested his acceptance
of them: the lieut. governor and council also desired,
that the negotiations might be renewed. The moment
for it was come. The town militia had thrown down
their arms. The citizens in general were discontented
and clamorous. Many of the American cannon were
dismounted, and others silenced for want of shot. All
expectation of succour was at an end. No hope re-
mained; but what little arose from the bare possibility,
that the flower of the British army on the continent,
9000 strong, flushed by their successful operations, and
seconded by a naval force, might be repulsed while at-
tempting a storm, by a garrison, worn down with hard
service, and under 3000 men. Gen. Lincoln wrote to
Sir H. Clinton, and offered to accept the terms before
proposed to him. The British commanders, averse to
the extremities of a storm, consented. The articles of

1780. capitulation were signed the next day by B. Lincoln, H.
May 12. Clinton, and M. Arbuthnot. It was stipulated, that the continental troops and sailors should remain prisoners of war until exchanged; and be supplied with good and wholesome provisions, in such quantity as is served out to the British troops. The militia were to return home as prisoners on parole; which, as long as they observed, was to secure them from being molested in their property by the British troops. The officers of the army and navy were to keep their swords, pistols and baggage, which was not to be searched, and were to retain their servants: but their horses were not to go out of town, but might be disposed of by a person left for the purpose. The garrison, at an hour appointed, was to march out of the town to the ground between the works of the place and the canal, where they were to deposit their arms. The drums were not to beat a British march, nor the colours to be uncased. All civil officers and citizens, who had borne arms during the siege, were to be prisoners on parole, and with respect to their property in the city, were to have the same terms as the militia; and all other persons in the town, not described in any article, were notwithstanding to be prisoners on parole. It was left to future discussion whether or no, a twelvemonth's time should be allowed to all such as do not choose to continue under the British government, to dispose of their effects, real and personal, in the state, without any molestation whatever, or to remove such part thereof as they choose, as well as themselves and families; and whether, during that time, they or any of them should have it in their option to reside occasionally in town or country. The French consul,

[illegible]

*A Sketch of
the Operations before
CHARLESTOWN,
SOUTH CAROLINA.
1780.*



*A Sketch
of S^t. Peter Parker's
Attack on
FORT MOULTRIE
June 28th
1776.*

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consul, the subjects of France and Spain, with their^{1780.} houses, papers, and other moveable property, were to be protected and untouched; but they were to consider themselves as prisoners on parole.

The return of the prisoners transmitted to Great Britain is swelled to upward of 5000, by comprehending every adult freeman of the town, between 2 and 3000 sailors taken from the shipping and put into the batteries, and those militia of both Carolinas that were in garrison. But the proper garrison did not amount to quite 2500 at the time of surrender. The real number of privates in the continental army was 1977, of whom 500 were in the hospitals. The captive officers were greatly out of proportion to them; and consisted of 1 major general, 6 brigadiers, 9 colonels, 14 lieut. colonels, 15 majors, 84 captains and capt. lieutenants, 84 lieutenants, 32 second lieutenants and ensigns. The commanders of the militia from the country were mostly of the first rank, and in honor repaired to the defence of the town, though they could not bring with them privates equal to their respective commands. The continental regiments were completely officered, while the adequate number of privates was greatly deficient. The supernumerary regular officers were retained in the garrison, from an apprehension that their being ordered out would have dispirited the army, and from an expectation in the early parts of the siege, that their services would be wanted to command the large reinforcements of militia that had been promised. During the 30 days siege, only 20 American soldiers deserted. The militia and sailors stationed in the batteries suffered little. Of the continentals who manned the lines, 89 were killed and

1780. 138 wounded; and of the Charlestown militia artillery stationed there, 3 were killed and 8 wounded. About 20 inhabitants were killed in their houses by random shot. Upward of 30 houses were burnt, and others greatly damaged. The total loss of the royal forces is stated at 76 killed and 189 wounded. A prodigious artillery was taken, considerably more than 400 pieces, including every sort, and those in the forts and ships*.

The capital having surrendered, the next object with the British was to secure the general submission of the inhabitants. To this end they posted garrisons in different parts of the country, and marched a large body of troops over the Santee toward that extremity of the state, which borders on the most populous settlements of North Carolina. This caused an immediate retreat of some American parties who had advanced into the upper parts of South Carolina, with the expectation of relieving Charlestown. Among the corps which had come forward with that view, there was one consisting of about 300 continentals, the rear of the Virginia line, commanded by col. Buford. Tarleton, with about 700 horse and foot, was sent in quest of this party. Having mounted his infantry, he marched 105 miles in 54 hours, came up with them at the Waxhaws, and demanded their surrender on terms similar to those granted to the continentals at Charlestown. While the flags were passing and repassing on this business, Tarleton kept his men in motion, and when the truce was ended, had

* General Lincoln's letters and papers, and other MSS. beside Dr. Ramsay's History and different publications, have been consulted in drawing up the above account of the operations respecting Charlestown.

1783.
May
29.

nearly surrounded his adversaries. An action instantly ensued. The continental party, having partaken of the general consternation occasioned by the British successes, made but a feeble resistance, and soon begged quarter. A few however continued to fire. The British cavalry advanced, but were not opposed by the main body of the continentals, who conceived themselves precluded by their submission. The accidental firing of the few, was an argument however for directing the British legion to charge those who had laid down their arms. In consequence of this order, the unresisting Americans, praying for quarters, were chopped in pieces. By Tarleton's official account of this bloody scene, 113 were killed, 150 badly wounded, unable to travel, and left on parole; and 53 made prisoners: while they made such ineffectual opposition as only to kill seven and wound twelve of the British. Lord Cornwallis bestowed on Tarleton the highest encomiums for this enterprise, and recommended him in a special manner to royal favor. *Tarleton's quarters* is become proverbial; and in subsequent battles a spirit of revenge will give a keener edge to military resentments.

Scarce had adm. Arbuthnot's fleet, with the troops under Sir H. Clinton, taken its departure from Sandy Hook for the reduction of Charlestown, ere an intense frost, with great falls of snow, shut up the navigation of the New York port from the sea. The increasing severity of the weather, toward the middle of January, entirely cut off all communication with the city by water, and soon after deprived the island of New York, and the adjoining islands, of all the defensive benefits of their insular situation. The North River, with the streights
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1780. and channels, by which they are divided and surrounded, were every where clothed with ice of such a strength and thickness, as would have admitted the passage of armies, with their heaviest carriages and artillery. In this situation the royal generals and officers at New York took the most prudent and speedy measures for the common defence. All orders of men in the city were embodied, armed and officered, so that the whole force, including seamen, amounted to near 6000. Gen. Washington however was in no condition to profit by the unlooked for event of a harder winter than was known even in that climate within the memory of man. He had weakened his army by detachments to the southward, for the relief of Charlestown. An ineffectual attempt was made indeed by lord Stirling, with the troops under his command, upon Staten Island on the 15th of January; but as the royalists retreated to their strong holds, and the ice afforded a bridge for reinforcements from New York, his lordship retreated at night.

The distressed situation of the American commander in chief, may be conjectured from the following account. A more general and alarming dissatisfaction appeared in his army, than ever before in any stage of the war. About the commencement of April it wore, in particular instances, features of a very dangerous complexion; produced partly by a diversity in the terms of the men's enlistment, partly by the inequality of the rewards given for entering into the service, but mostly by the disparity in the provision made by the several states for their respective troops. The uneasiness continued increasing, from the army's receiving for a considerable time no more than a half, a quarter, or an eighth of their allowance.

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They bore long with the greatest patience their distress, 1780. and every thing was due to the officers for encouraging them to it, both by exhortation and example. But on the 25th of May at night, two regiments mutinied; however, after several expostulations and exertions by the officers, they returned to their huts. A fortnight before, gen. Greene wrote to his excellency—"I have May little prospect either of providing for the march of the Maryland troops to the southward, or of putting this army in motion. Many stores contracted for on advantageous terms, and which I had hopes of possessing, have since been sold at private sale for want of money to fulfil our contracts. Many engaged in the manufactory of a variety of articles, seeing but little prospect of our being able to fulfil the conditions on our part, have declined going on. A great number of waggons on which we depended for this army have been sold, and others left unfinished. All our public horses, which have been out to winter and recruit, have been nigh unto starving, and many have actually perished for want of proper supplies of forage. The stores that we have provided at Boston, Pennsylvania and elsewhere, we find ourselves unable to get forward. Numberless embarrassments lie before me, such as state laws, vulgar prejudices, want of money and support, as well as heavy demands against the department." The distresses of his department were the subjects of another letter ten days after, in which he said—"Private emolument has been but a secondary object with far the greatest part of the staff officers. The numbers who have been benefitted by their appointments are very small, while hundreds have suffered both in character and fortune from their employ-

1780. employments, and are now loaded with heavy debts, without the remotest prospect of being able to pay them, and have every obstacle thrown in the way of settling their accounts, to prevent their demands being fixed." Well might another general address the commander in chief on the last of May, with—"Dear Sir, I am very sensible of the embarrassments and perplexities you mention in your private letter. They would I am certain have depressed, and perhaps subdued almost any mind but yours; and I have often thought and frequently said, that the difficulty of your situation and command gave you more intrinsic merit, than the victories others have obtained. This I doubt not history will hereafter testify to the world, when your enemies are forgotten."

General Washington however had some consolation from the arrival of the marquis de la Fayette at head quarters about the 12th of May. During his voyage from Boston to France he had a narrow escape, a dangerous conspiracy of the British sailors, who composed a great proportion of the Alliance's crew, having nearly succeeded. On his safe arrival, without authority to solicit assistance in troops, he through zeal for the American United States devoted himself to obtain it. He boldly applied for such aid, and took upon himself all consequences on each side of the Atlantic. He also assiduously employed himself in procuring loans of money and succour of every kind. When he had so far prevailed with the French court, that he could announce in America, that he should be followed by a fleet and corps of French troops, he commenced his return to this continent. The special news he brought with him, he was only at liberty to mention to congress and gen.

Wash-

Washington. Having communicated it to the general, ^{1780.} he proceeded on the 13th for Philadelphia, and laid the same before congress; who three days after passed a very honorable resolve concerning him, without hinting at the intelligence they had received. The people, though totally ignorant of his last services, expressed their great joy at the marquis's return. That propriety might exist in reference to the intended aid from France when arrived, gen. Washington has been appointed lieutenant general of his most christian majesty's troops in America, and vice-admiral of the white flag. On Friday May the 19th congress resolved, "That bills be immediately ^{19.} drawn on Dr. Franklin for 25,000 dollars, and on Mr. Jay for 25,000 dollars, payable at 60 days sight; and that the money be applied solely to the bringing of the army into the field, and forwarding their supplies in such a manner, as the exigency and nature of the service may require."

This day has been rendered very remarkable by an extraordinary phenomenon, which demands a particular relation. An unusual darkness came on between the hours of ten and eleven in the morning, and continued to increase. Your friend, having been accustomed to dark days at London, and frequently observed from his study, the bright shining sun gradually and at length totally eclipsed as it descended behind the thick vapor which hung over the city, regarded it with no special attention till called to do it by his neighbours, who were much alarmed. He dined by candle-light about one. After that it grew much lighter; and he walked about five o'clock to a tavern, a mile distant on the road to Boston, to meet a select committee of Roxbury on special

1780. cial business. When they had finished about eight at night, he set out for home, not suspecting but that, being fully acquainted with every foot of the road, he should easily return notwithstanding its being extremely dark. There were houses all the way, though at a considerable distance from each other. He marked the candle-light of one, and with that in his eye went forward till he got up to it; but remarked that the appearance of the place was so different from what was usual, that he could not have believed it to be what it was, had it not been from his certain knowledge of its situation. He caught the light of a second house which he also reached; and thus on. At length the light being removed from the last he had gained a sight of, ere he was up with it, he found himself in such profound darkness as to be incapable of proceeding, and therefore returned to the house he had passed and procured a lantern. Several of the company having further to go were on horseback. The horses could not see to direct themselves; and by the manner in which they took up and put down their feet on the plain ground, appeared to be involved in total darkness, and to be afraid lest the next step should plunge them into an abyfs. The gentlemen soon stopt at another tavern, and waited for the benefit of the moon: but after a while finding that the air received no accession of light from it, when they were certain it was risen, they had recourse to candles to assist them in getting home. In some instances horses felt the forcible operation of the darkness so strongly, that they could not be compelled by their masters to quit the stable at night when wanted for particular service. The shifting of the wind put an end to it, and

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at midnight it was succeeded by a bright moon and star light. The degree to which it arose was different in different places. In most parts of the country it was so great in the day-time, that the people could not tell the hour by either watch or clock, nor dine, nor manage their domestic business without the light of candles. The birds having sung their evening songs disappeared, and were silent: pigeons and fowls retired to roost: the cocks crew as at day-break; objects could not be distinguished but at a very little distance; and every thing bore the appearance and gloom of night. The extent of this darkness was extraordinary. It was observed as far east as Falmouth. To the westward it reached to the furthest parts of Connecticut, and to Albany. To the southward, it was observed all along the sea coasts; and to the north as far as the American settlements extend. We are told that a vessel at sea found herself enclosed for a while in a cloud of this darkness, and as she sailed, passed instantly from the verge of it into a clear light.

This phenomenon appears to have been owing to the clouds being highly charged with smoke, which they had been collecting for days, from the fires in the back country. It is the American custom to make large fires in the woods, for the purpose of clearing the lands in the new settlements. This was practised in the spring of the present year, in a much greater degree than usual, through the interruption that had been given to that business for a few years by the war. In the county of York, in the western parts of New Hampshire and Massachusetts, and in Vermont, uncommonly large fires had been kept up to the extent of many score miles,

1780, all round the frontiers. Thus the people in the new towns had been employed for two or three weeks: beside, some large and extensive fires had raged in the woods for several days before they could be extinguished. The weather being clear, the air weighty, and the winds small and variable for several days; the smoke instead of dispersing, rose and constantly collected in the air, till the atmosphere was loaded with such an uncommon quantity of it, as proved in combination with other vapors the parent of the preceding darkness*.

Let us proceed to our military narrative.

- June 6. Eleven days previous to Sir Henry Clinton's arrival at New York from Charlestown, the gens. Knyphausen, Robertson, Tryon and Sterling, passed over by night, with 5000 men, from Staten Island to Elizabeth-town Point. Col. Dayton, who commanded some militia, hearing that they were coming in force, went and reconnoitred, and placed a guard of twelve men in advance, whom he ordered to oppose the enemy as long as they could, and then retire. Sterling being the youngest general, commanded the advanced corps, and was fired upon and wounded in the knee by the twelve, shortly after the debarkation: this however occasioned no long delay. The royal troops entered Elizabeth-town very early in the morning; where they observed strict discipline and great decorum. They then advanced to Connecticut Farms about five miles distant. In this neighbourhood lived the Rev. Mr. James Caldwell, the presbyterian minister of Elizabeth-town. The active part he had taken in support of the American cause, and his
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* See Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, vol. 1, p. 234. Boston printed, 1785.

successful influence in spiriting up the Jersey people to ¹⁷⁸⁰ oppose the British forces, rendered him an object of their keenest resentment, and made it insecure for him to reside in his own town. Upon the news of the enemy's advancing, he withdrew from his present habitation; and supposing that it might be done with safety, left his wife and children behind. Mrs. Caldwell however was afterward fearful of staying, lest there should be firing in the street, till col. Dayton advised her to continue, as he should not suffer it in his troops, which would prevent the danger of it from the enemy. He accordingly marched the militia from the Farms, on to a pass leading to Springfield, of which he possessed himself. Soon after, the royal forces arrived in the neighbourhood of the Farms, when a soldier came to the house, and putting his gun to the window of the room where Mrs. Caldwell was sitting (with her children, and a maid with an infant in her arms along side of her) fired and shot her instantly dead. The body, at the earnest request of an officer of the new levies, was with some difficulty suffered to be carried to a small house at a distance, before Mr. Caldwell's dwelling was set on fire and consumed, together with every thing belonging to him. The enemy burnt about a dozen other houses, and the presbyterian meeting, and then marched toward Springfield. Col. Dayton, with the militia that joined the few taken with him, fought them for a while at the pass he had occupied. On their approaching the bridge near the town, they found a small body of continental troops under gen. Maxwell, and a number of militia hastily collected within a few hours, posted at the place: they therefore halted, and continued on the same ground

1780. till night, when the design of attacking Springfield was given up, and they returned to Elizabeth-town in a degree of confusion.

No sooner had intelligence of their excursion reached Morris-town, than a detachment of the American army was ordered to Springfield: this however, when joined to the force already there, would have been no wise equal to the royal army. The whole number of continentals did not exceed two thousand five hundred men. It was thought by the Americans, that the enemy's intentions, when they came out, were to drive gen. Washington from Morris-town, and to spread desolation through that part of the country. Gen. Greene, considering the strength of the enemy and the weakness of the continental army, was desirous that the commander in chief would change his position, under the plea of marching to guard the heights of the North River, on the assumed supposition, that the real design of the enemy was against them, and that Knyphausen's attack was only meant as a feint: but the sudden return of the latter to Elizabeth-town, rendered the measure for the present unnecessary. The murder of Mrs. Caldwell may be viewed as the act of a single soldier; but the burning of houses must be placed to the account of the commanding officers. These events excited such an enthusiastic rage, that the militia turned out with remarkable spirit, and did themselves great honor. The commander in chief, in his subsequent general orders, highly commended the behaviour of the militia and all the corps concerned in opposing Knyphausen, and said—"Col. Dayton merits particular thanks." The enemy had been told, before they entered on the trial, that should they march 5000 men

men into Jersey, the inhabitants, dispirited to the utmost ¹⁷⁸⁰ on account of the misfortune at the southward, would submit without resistance, and that the soldiery of the continental army would desert to them on every occasion. This army, without suffering by desertions, would not have been able to have kept the field, but for the assistance of the Jersey militia. Its weakness was occasioned by the numbers who had left it when their enlistment was out; by its not having been joined by a single draught, nor received two hundred recruits from all the states east of Maryland; and by the troops that had been sent on for the protection of the Carolinas. It received no other reinforcements but militia, till after the destruction of Springfield.

The royal forces remained at Elizabeth-town. Sir H. Clinton on his arrival at New York, determined to improve on the original design, and to afford them an opportunity of acting with effect. For this purpose troops were embarked, and such preparations made, as indicated an immediate expedition up the North River. Upon this, gen. Washington, to be ready in case of any real design against West Point, or other strong holds in the Highlands, marched with the greatest part of the army toward Pompton on the 21st, leaving about 700 men with the horse under the command of gen. Greene. His march was so slow (as he meant not to increase his distance from Greene beyond what was necessary) that he was only about eleven miles from Morris-town the next day. In the afternoon Greene sent off an express to him with this note—"June 22d, Springfield 5 o'clock. —Mr. — this moment returned from Elizabeth-town, says, that the British army will be in motion this even-

1780. ing. The gentleman is to meet the British at the West Farms this evening a little back of Newark. He left the enemy at 3 o'clock this afternoon, and appears to be in great trepidation." It was in a few hours followed by a second—"10 o'clock. I have been impatiently waiting in consequence of the intelligence from M. P——l. He says he is employed by your excellency. May not the enemy be apprized of his being a double spy, and endeavour to play him off accordingly?" The third put gen. Washington out of all further suspense—"23d, 6 o'clock. The enemy are out on their march toward this place in full force, having received a considerable reinforcement last night." When it got to hand, his excellency ordered a part of his troops to return and support Greene; but the action was over, and the enemy retreated, before it could reach him.

June
23.

The royal army advanced from Elizabeth-town about 5 in the morning. Their march was rapid and compact, and in two columns, one on the main road leading to Springfield, the other on the Vauxhall-road. The American troops were necessarily so extended, that gen. Greene had scarce time to collect them at Springfield, and make the necessary dispositions, ere the enemy appeared before the town, when a cannonade commenced on each side. They continued manœuvring in Greene's front for upward of two hours. He disposed of the troops in the best manner he could, to guard his flanks, secure a retreat, and oppose the advance of their columns. Col. Angell, with his regiment, and several small detachments, and one piece of artillery, was posted to secure the bridge in front of the town. Col. Shrieve's regiment was drawn up at the second bridge, to cover

the retreat of those posted at the first. Major Lee, with his dragoons and the picquets, were posted at Little-bridge on the Vauxhall-road, and col. Ogden was detached to support them. The remainder of gens. Maxwell's and Stark's brigades were drawn up on high grounds. The militia were on the flanks. While the enemy were making appearances of operation on their left, their right column advanced on major Lee. The bridge was disputed with great obstinacy; but the enemy by fording the river, and gaining the point of a hill, obliged the major, with his party, to give up the pass. At this instant, their left column began the attack on col. Angell: the action was severe, and lasted about forty minutes, when superior numbers overcame obstinate bravery, and forced the Americans to retire over the second bridge, where the enemy were warmly received by col. Shrieve's regiment; but as they advanced in great force, with a large train of artillery, he had orders to join the brigade. Greene would have made a detachment in time for the support of Angell, but was in expectation that the royalists would ford the river, the dangerous consequence of which was to be guarded against. The advantages they had now gained, made it advisable for gen. Greene to take post with his troops upon a range of hills, where the roads are brought so near to a point, that succour can readily be given from one to the other. Being thus commodiously posted, the general hoped that they would have attempted to gain the heights; but they declined it, and began firing the town. Near fifty dwelling houses were burnt, and the whole village, excepting four houses, was reduced to ashes. This conflagration closed the enterprise. The

1780. strength of Greene's situation, the difficulties of the approach, an ignorance of his real force, and the bold defence made at the bridge, might severally concur, in preventing all further attempt to penetrate through the intervening hills and defiles, that they might gain possession of Morris-town, and destroy the American stores, magazines and defences there and in the neighbourhood, which appears to have been their first object. They made a second retreat from Springfield, being pursued with great spirit and redoubled animosity by the militia (who were highly enraged at the conflagration that they had just beheld) till they entered Elizabeth-town, which was about sun-set. They passed on to Elizabeth-town Point, where they continued until twelve at night, and then began to cross to Staten Island; by six the next morning they had totally evacuated the point, and removed their bridge. They suffered considerably on the 23d, but Greene's loss was trifling, not more than twenty killed, and about sixty wounded. The American commander in chief, in general orders of the 26th, returned his warmest thanks to gen. Greene and all the officers, for the good conduct and gallantry they had displayed; and took particular notice of col. Angell and his regiment.

When congress had received information from the marquis de la Fayette, of the preparation his most christian majesty was making to aid the United States with a powerful naval and military force; they appointed a committee to write to the different governments, requiring them to fill up the continental army and to forward supplies, in order to a readiness for co-operating with the expected assistance. The commander in chief
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and other popular officers, joined in stimulating them by every motive, to furnish speedily their respective quotas. The disgrace of appearing contemptible in the eyes of their great ally, and the mischief which must be the consequence, were strongly urged. The people were passionately called upon, not to suffer the curse of another campaign to rest upon America. They were told that the eyes of all Europe were upon them; and that their future independence, fortune and happiness depended upon their present exertion. Notwithstanding these joint efforts, gen. Washington had to complain—"It is with infinite chagrin and mortification, I find that at this day, the fourth of July, more than six weeks since the first application to the states for the succour necessary for the intended co-operation, not more than thirty levies have to my knowledge joined any part of the army: nor have I any information what has been effected in this respect by any one of the states. Some of them have not even informed me what they intend to do." The Massachusetts general court had indeed ordered, by their resolves of June the 5th and 23d, a reinforcement to be sent on, but it had not arrived. A voluntary subscription was likewise begun about the beginning of the same month in Philadelphia, for the raising of a fund of hard money, to be given as bounties to fill up the full quota of the Pennsylvania line. The general assembly of that state had on the 1st of June provided for those exigencies in war, that might require sudden and extraordinary exertions, by resolving unanimously, that during the recess of the house, should it be necessary, the president (Joseph Reed esq; whose name has often occurred) or vice-president in council, be empow-

1780. ered to declare martial law for the public security, and the safety of the citizens of that commonwealth. A bank was also established for supplying the army with provisions; and a number of gentlemen engaged to support it with 189,000l. sterling, payable in gold and silver, according to the sum against which each subscribed his name on the 17th. But the American daughters of liberty in Philadelphia, were desirous of sharing with the gentlemen in the splendors of patriotism. They had long aspired to the honor of giving the continental army some public mark of the esteem they entertained of their virtue: they therefore concluded upon forming an association. To this end "*The sentiments of an American Woman*" were published in the Gazette of the 12th, and the day following several ladies assembled. It was proposed to divide the city into ten districts, nearly equal in extent, and to invite three or four ladies in each to go to every house in their ward, and to present to each woman and girl, without any distinction, a subscription paper meant to procure donations. Forty ladies were invited, who undertook the task assigned them with pleasure, considering it as a great honor. The day following the invitation, they set out on foot, observing to keep exactly to their own ward. As the cause of their visit was known, they were received with all the respect due to their commission: in the mean time the offering intended for the soldiers was presented to them. They did not omit a single house: the collection they made was considerable; but has been much increased by donations from ladies in the country. It is expected that their example will be more or less followed in other states.

For the honor of the Pennsylvania state, you must be furnished with the preamble and parts of an act passed the 1st of last March, in the following words—"When we contemplate our abhorrence of the condition, to which the arms and tyranny of Great Britain were exerted to reduce us—when we look back on the variety of dangers to which we have been exposed, and how miraculously our wants, in many instances, have been supplied, and our deliverances wrought, when even hope and human fortitude have become unequal to the conflict—we are unavoidably led to a serious and grateful sense of the manifold blessings which we have undeservedly received from the hand of that Being, from whom every good and perfect gift cometh. Impressed with these ideas, we conceive that it is our duty, and we rejoice that it is in our power, to extend a portion of that freedom to others, which hath been extended to us; and a release from that state of thralldom, to which we ourselves were tyrannically doomed, and from which we have now every prospect of being delivered. It is not for us to enquire why, in the creation of mankind, the inhabitants of the several parts of the earth were distinguished by a difference in feature or complexion. It is sufficient to know, that all are the work of an Almighty hand. We find in the distribution of the human species, that the most fertile as well as the most barren parts of the earth, are inhabited by men of complexions different from ours, and from each other; from whence we may reasonably as well as religiously, infer, that he who placed them in their various situations, hath extended equally his care and protection to all, and that it becometh not us to counteract his mercies. We esteem

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1780. it a peculiar blessing granted to us, that we are enabled in this day to add one more step to universal civilization, by removing, as much as possible, the sorrows of those who have lived in undeserved bondage, and from which, by the assumed authority of the kings of Great Britain, no effectual, legal relief could be obtained. Weaned by a long course of experience from those narrow prejudices and partialities we had imbibed, we find our hearts enlarged with kindness and benevolence toward men of all conditions and nations; and we conceive ourselves, at this particular period, extraordinarily called upon, by the blessings which we have received, to manifest the sincerity of our profession, and to give a substantial proof of our gratitude."

"And whereas the condition of those persons, who have heretofore been denominated negro and mulatto slaves, has been attended with circumstances which not only deprived them of the common blessings that they were by nature entitled to, but has cast them into the deepest afflictions, by an unnatural separation and sale of husband and wife from each other, and from their children,—an injury, the greatness of which can only be conceived by supposing that we were in the same unhappy case:—In justice, therefore, to persons so unhappily circumstanced, and who, having no prospect before them whereon they may rest their sorrows and hopes, have no reasonable inducement to render their service to society, which otherwise they might; and also in grateful commemoration of our own happy deliverance from that state of unconditional submission, to which we were doomed by the tyranny of Britain—Be it enacted, that no child born hereafter shall be a slave—that negro

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and mulatto children shall be servants only till twenty-^{1780.} eight years of age—that all slaves shall be registered before the 1st of November next—that negroes, &c. shall be tried like other inhabitants—that none shall be deemed slaves but those registered—that slaves carried away, &c. from this state, may be brought back and registered—and that no negroes or mulattoes, other than infants, shall be bound for longer than seven years.”

The expected succour from France arrived at length ^{July} in the evening of Monday, July the 10th, at Rhode ^{10.} Island. The chevalier de Ternay commands the fleet, consisting of two ships of 80 guns, one of 74, four of 64, two frigates of 40, a cutter of 20, an hospital ship, pierced for 64, a bomb ship and 32 transports. The land forces consist of four old regiments, beside the legion de Lauzun, and a battalion of artillery *, amounting to about 6000 men, under the command of lieutenant general count de Rochambeau. The inhabitants of Newport illuminated the town upon the occasion. Gen. Heath was present to receive the troops upon their landing, and to put them into possession of the forts and batteries upon the island. On the 24th, a committee ^{24.} from the general assembly of the state then sitting in the town, waited on the count with a complimentary address. Rochambeau declared in his answer, that he only brought over the van guard of a much greater force destined for their aid; and that he was ordered by the king to assure them, that his whole power should be exerted for their support. “The French troops,” he

* The list is given from the Providence paper of July, published the week after their arrival at Newport; and differs from the English publications, which mention in the list one 84 and two 74 gun ships, five frigates and two armed ships.

said,

1780. said, "are under the strictest discipline; and, acting under the orders of gen. Washington, will live with the Americans as their brethren. I am highly sensible of the marks of respect shown me by the general assembly, and beg leave to assure them, that as brethren, not only my life, but the lives of the troops under my command, are entirely devoted to their service." The French admiral was complimented in like manner. Four days before, the American commander in chief strongly recommended to the officers of the continental army, in general orders, the wearing of black and white cockades (the ground being of the first colour, and the relief of the second) as a compliment to, and a symbol of friendship and affection for their allies. The marquis de la Fayette arrived at Newport from head quarters, the same day that the addresses were presented to the French commanders; and undoubtedly carried with him the sentiments of gen. Washington on the movements then making on the part of the British. Though admiral Arbuthnot had only four sail of the line at New York, on the 10th, he was within a very few days so strengthened by the arrival of adm. Graves, with six ships of the line from Great Britain, that he had no longer any apprehensions of an attack from the French squadron. The British commanders had indeed so decided a superiority of force, that they lost no time in preparing to act offensively, both by sea and land. Sir H. Clinton embarked about 8000 men, and proceeded to Huntington bay in Long Island, meanwhile the militia from Massachusetts and Connecticut were ordered to Rhode Island: so that the French regretted his stopping short, and declining to pay them a visit, as they were well prepared to give him a warm reception.

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At the same time gen. Washington designed availing ^{1780.} himself of Sir Henry's absence, by attacking New York. He had received considerable reinforcements, and suddenly crossed the North River and marched toward Kings-bridge. Sir Henry perceiving what was intended, dropped his expedition to Rhode Island, and sailed for New York on the 31st, after having lain several days in ^{July} _{31.} Huntington bay. Gen. Washington proposed to gen. Arnold his having a command in the designed attack on New York. The proposal threw him into no small confusion; but Washington had no suspicions raised by it, for though he thought him mercenary, he had not the least idea of his being wanting in fidelity. Arnold afterward made his objections to some of Washington's suite, and urged his being lame as disqualifying him for activity in field duty. The objections being reported to the commander in chief, Arnold was ordered to proceed ^{Aug.} _{3.} to West Point, and take the command of that post and its dependencies.

We must now attend to an event, which could not be related in chronological order without disturbing the preceding narrative. Gen. Washington being informed, that there was a considerable number of cattle and horses on Bergen Neck, detached gen. Wayne, on the 20th of July, with the 1st and 2d Pennsylvania brigade, four pieces of artillery, and col. Moyland's regiment of dragoons to bring them off. He contemplated also the destruction of a block-house, which gave security to a body of refugees, who committed depredations on the well affected inhabitants for miles round. Wayne having provided against the enemy's intercepting his retreat, and sent down the cavalry to drive off the stock, proceeded

1780. ceded to the block-house, which was surrounded with an abatis and stockade. He tried the effects of his field pieces; but found them too light to penetrate the logs. The troops being galled the mean while, by a constant fire from the loop holes of the house, and seeing no chance of making a breach with the cannon, two regiments rushed through the abatis to the foot of the stockade, with a view of forcing an entrance, which was impracticable. This intemperate valor occasioned the loss of 3 officers wounded, 15 non-commissioned and privates killed, and 46 non-commissioned and privates wounded. The stock in the mean time was driven off.

Let us now turn our eyes to South Carolina and its neighbourhood: where the British troops spread themselves, and plundered by system, forming a general stock, and appointing commissaries of captures. Spoil thus collected was disposed of for the benefit of the royal army. The quantity brought to market was so great, that though it sold uncommonly low, yet the dividend of a major general was upward of four thousand British guineas. The private plunder of individuals, on their separate account, was often more than their proportion of the public stock. Over and above what was sold in Carolina, several vessels were sent abroad to market, loaded with rich spoil taken from the inhabitants. Upward of two thousand negroes were shipped off at one embarkation.

When Charlestown had surrendered, the next object with the British was to secure the general submission of the inhabitants. To this end they posted garrisons in different parts of the country, and marched a large body of

of troops over the Santee toward that extremity of the 1780.
 state, which borders on the most populous settlements
 of North Carolina. This caused an immediate retreat
 of some American parties, that had advanced into the
 upper parts of South Carolina, with the expectation of
 relieving Charlestown. The total rout or capture of all
 the southern continental troops in the state, together with
 the universal panic occasioned by the surrender of the
 capital, suspended for about six weeks, all military op-
 position to the progress of the British army.

Sir H. Clinton, a week before the defeat of colonel
 Buford by Tarleton, had in a proclamation denounced
 vengeance against those of the inhabitants, who should
 continue, by force of arms, to oppose the re-establish- June
 ment of British government. On the 1st of June, he 1.
 and adm. Arbuthnot, as commissioners for restoring
 peace to the revolted colonies, offered, by proclamation,
 to the inhabitants, with a few exceptions, pardon for past
 offences, and a reinstatement in the possession of all the
 rights and immunities they had heretofore enjoyed under
 a free British government, *exempt from taxation, except*
by their own legislature, as soon as the situation of the
 province would admit. These offers, in the present
 situation of affairs, induced the people in the country to
 abandon all schemes of further resistance. The militia
 to the southward of Charlestown sent in a flag to the
 British commanding officer at Beaufort, and obtained
 terms similar to those granted to the inhabitants of the
 capital. At Camden the inhabitants met the British
 with a flag, and negotiated for themselves. The people
 of Ninety Six assembled to deliberate what course they
 should take. Being informed that the British were ad-
 vancing,

1780. vancing, they sent a flag to the commanding officer, from whom they learned, that Sir H. Clinton had delegated full powers to capt. Richard Pearis to treat with them. Articles were proposed and soon after ratified, by which they were promised the same security for their persons and property which British subjects enjoyed. They submitted under a mistaken opinion, that agreeable to a proclamation previous to the surrender of Charlestown, they were to be either neutrals or prisoners on parole. Excepting the extremities of the state bordering on North Carolina, the inhabitants continuing in the country preferred submission to resistance.

Sir H. Clinton, about the time that Charlestown surrendered, received intelligence, that a large number of land forces and a French fleet, commanded by M. de Ternay, might soon be expected on the American coast. This induced him to reembark for New York early in June, with the greatest part of his army, which otherwise was to have remained, and been employed in the conquest of the adjacent states. But before he sailed, all the inhabitants of the province, and prisoners upon parole, and not in the military line (excepting those taken by capitulation, or in confinement at the surrender of Charlestown) were, by proclamation of June the 3d, freed from all such paroles from and after the 20th of the month; and in case of their afterward neglecting to return to their allegiance and his majesty's government, were to be considered as enemies and rebels to the same, and to be treated accordingly. It was designed, by this arbitrary change of their relative condition, to oblige them, without their consent, to take an *active part* in settling and securing the royal government. Prior to this

June
3.

this proclamation, the submission of the South Carolina inhabitants was accepted on easy terms. All, with a few exceptions, on applying, obtained either paroles as prisoners, or protections as British subjects: the latter were required to subscribe a declaration of their allegiance to the king; this however was frequently omitted in the hurry of business. An unusual calm followed. But the proclamation produced astonishment and confusion; especially as the parties referred to were required to enrol themselves as militia under the royal standard. Numbers, considering themselves as released from their parole by the proclamation, conceived that they had a right to arm against the British; and were induced so to do, from the very menace used against them, that they who did not enrol themselves as British subjects, must expect to be treated as enemies. Many more however, for convenience, exchanged their paroles for protections, and enrolled themselves as militia; several undoubtedly with an intention of breaking through the compulsory tie, as soon as a proper opportunity presented.

When Sir H. Clinton departed from Charlestown, lord Cornwallis was left in command with about 4000 men, who were deemed fully sufficient for extending the British conquests, after the adoption of the above measures to oblige the inhabitants of the country to be active in securing the royal government now established. On the 5th, two days before he sailed, two hundred and ten of the principal inhabitants, congratulated him and the admiral upon their successes. The greater part of them had been in arms against the British during the siege, and a few had been leaders in the popular government.

1782 In answer to their address, they were promised the privileges and protection of British subjects, on subscribing a test of their allegiance, and willingness to support the royal cause. Many of their fellow citizens soon followed their example of exchanging paroles for protections. Those who owned estates in the country, had no security by capitulation for any property out of the lines, unless they became subjects. Such as declined doing it met with every discouragement. A numerous class of people were reduced to the alternative of starving or suing for protection. Traders and shopkeepers, after having contracted large debts, by purchasing of the British merchants who came with the conquering army, were precluded by lord Cornwallis's proclamation of July the 25th, from selling the goods they had purchased, unless they assumed the name and character of British subjects. Thus were multitudes pressed into a service, which they were ready to desert upon every occasion. But its triumphant state made the royalists, in both Carolinas, confident of British protection, and greatly increased them by accessions from those who alway side with the strongest. A large body of them collected under the command of col. Moore in North Carolina, on the 22d of June. The greatest part had taken the oath of allegiance to that state, and many had done militia duty in the American service. Their premature insurrection, contrary to lord Cornwallis's advice to his friends, which was to remain inactive till he had advanced into their settlements, subjected them to an immediate dispersion. Gen. Rutherford instantly marched against these insurgents, but was so short of lead that he could arm only 300 men. Col. Lock advanced with this detachment

twenty-five miles ahead to observe them, while the main body halted for a supply of ammunition. The colonel, though greatly inferior in force, was reduced to the necessity of attacking or being attacked. He chose the former; and capt. Falls, with a party of horse, rushed into the middle of the royalists, and threw them into confusion. Twenty-two of the whig militia were killed or wounded: among the former were six of their officers, who were singled out by riflemen among the insurgents. The captain was one of the slain. Col. Moore proposed to col. Lock a cessation of all hostilities for an hour, which being agreed to, the former ran off with his whole party. Scarce was this insurrection quelled, ere another party of North Carolina royalists under col. Brian, marched down on the east side of the Yadkin, and joined the British army at Camden.

As the British advanced to the upper part of South Carolina, a considerable number of the determined friends of independence retreated before them, and took refuge in North Carolina. In this class was col. Sumpter, who formerly commanded a continental regiment, and was known to possess a great share of bravery and other military talents. Soon after he had left his home, a British detachment turned his wife and family out of doors, and burned his house and every thing in it. A party of South Carolina exiles, who had convened in North Carolina, made choice of him for a leader. At the head of this little band of patriots, he soon returned to his own state, and took the field against the victorious British, at a time when the inhabitants had generally abandoned the idea of supporting their own independence. Col. Sumpter had every difficulty to encounter. His

1780. followers were in a great measure unfurnished with arms and ammunition, and had no magazines from which they could draw a supply. The iron tools on the neighbouring farms, were worked up for their use by common blacksmiths into rude weapons of war. They supplied themselves with bullets, by melting the pewter with which they were furnished by private housekeepers. When the colonel at the head of these volunteers penetrated into his own state, and re-commenced a military opposition to the British, after it had been suspended about six weeks; all the indignant passions of the royal officers were roused against the inhabitants. Without taking any share of the blame to themselves, for their mistaken policy in constraining men to an involuntary submission, they charged them with studied duplicity and treachery, and laid aside lenient measures for those that were dictated by revenge. They were further irritated, by a suspicion that the inhabitants connived at, if not facilitated the escape of deserters who were become numerous. An apprehension of that kind wrought so upon lord Rawdon, that he threatened to punish either by whipping, imprisonment, or transportation to the West Indies there to serve his majesty, any person who should meet a soldier straggling without a written pass beyond the picquets, and not do his utmost to secure him; or who should shelter such straggling soldiers, serve them as a guide, or furnish them with any other assistance. To encourage the country people in putting a stop to desertions, he promised to give them ten guineas for the head of any deserter belonging to the volunteers of Ireland, and five guineas only if they brought him in alive; and a reward, though not to that amount,

July
1.

for

for such deserters as they might procure belonging to 1789
any other regiment.

Colonel Sumpter having taken the field, a party of
his corps, consisting of 133 men, engaged a detachment 12.
of the British troops, and a large body of Tories, com-
manded by capt. Huck, in the upper parts of South Ca-
rolina. The royalists were posted in a lane, both ends
of which were entered at the same time by the Ameri-
cans. They were speedily routed and dispersed. Col.
Ferguson of the British militia, capt. Huck, and sever-
al others were killed. This was the first advantage
gained over the royal forces since their landing in the
beginning of the year. At the moment the attack was
made, a number of women were on their knees vainly
soliciting capt. Huck in behalf of their families and
property. During his command, he in a very particu-
lar manner displayed his enmity to the Presbyterians,
by burning the library and dwelling-house of their cler-
gyman, and all bibles containing the Scotch translation of
the psalms, which is held in the highest veneration by the
generality of the Scotch and Irish Presbyterians, and their
descendants, through the United States. These proceed-
ings inspired the numerous devout people of the district
with an unusual animation. They generally arranged them-
selves under col. Sumpter, and opposed the British with
the enthusiasm of men called upon to defend, not only
their civil liberties but their holy religion. The effects
of this ardor were very sensibly felt, for the colonel was
soon reinforced to the number of 600 men.

No sooner did gen. Gates hear of the commencement
of Sir H. Clinton's operations to the southward, but he
wrote in the beginning of March to Mr. Matthews, a

1780. South Carolina delegate at congress,—“From the arrival of Sir H. Clinton and lord Cornwallis in the Savannah, and their landing the army upon the Carolina side of the river, it can be no longer doubted, that it has been resolved at St. James’s, to remove the theatre of the war to the southern states.” He then pointed out as the measures to be immediately taken—the sending all the troops raised west of the Delaware, instantly by the water route to James river, and marching them directly cross North Carolina to meet the enemy. Mr. Matthews received the letter on the 13th of March just as he was going to the house: when there, he stated the contents of it as a matter of information and not of opinion, with a view of attracting more effectually the attention of congress. He then took the liberty of proposing the plan of operations for the southern campaign agreeable to Gates’s ideas. The proposal was not duly regarded; and it was not till afterward that the resolution was taken to send forward the Maryland and Delaware lines. These amounted only to 1400 effective men. They marched from head quarters at Morris-town on the 16th of April, under the command of baron de Kalb, embarked at the Head of Elk in May, landed soon at Petersburg in Virginia, and from thence proceeded by land toward South Carolina. Virginia made great and effectual exertions to expedite their movements: but in North Carolina little or no preparations were made for supporting the troops or transporting their baggage. The baron was under the necessity of halting on Deep river the 6th of July. He received frequent assurances of support; but found no resources except in making frequent detachments for collecting provisions, which were

were inadequate to the necessities of the troops, who subsisted principally upon lean cattle collected in the woods. The commissaries and quarter masters complained, that the want of cash and of credit were insuperable obstacles to the discharge of their duty.

Upon gen. Lincoln's being made prisoner at Charlestown, the forces of the southern district devolved on Baron de Kalb. His experience and abilities were allowed to be great; but as he was a foreigner, unacquainted with the country, and unaccustomed to the temper of undisciplined troops, who were to constitute the major part of the army, these and other reasons wrought in favor of gen. Gates, who was considered in common as the best qualified for the command; and it was unanimously resolved in congress on the 13th of June, "that major gen. Gates do immediately repair to and take the command of the southern department:" the next day he was empowered to take such measures for the defence of the southern states as he might think most proper. He received the resolves of congress at Traveller's Rest in Virginia, a few miles from Shepherd's-town, on the 20th, and set out on Monday the 26th. He soon felt for himself, finding that he succeeded to the command, of an army without strength, of a military chest without money, of a department apparently deficient in public spirit, and in a climate that increased despondency, instead of animating the soldier's arm. He had before him the most unpromising prospect his eyes ever beheld. He arrived at the camp on the 25th of July; and at a review of the troops the next day, was in every respect received by the Baron with marks of the greatest distinction. In return he treated

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25.

1780. his predecessor with due consideration, confirmed his standing orders, and requested that he would keep the command of his division as formerly in the grand army. The Baron's division consisted of all the Maryland and Delaware troops: these with a small legionary corps under col. Armand, consisting of about 60 horse and as many foot soldiers, who arrived a few days before, and three companies of artillery, constituted the whole of the army. The Baron with great satisfaction complied with Gates's request. A considerable body of North Carolina militia had taken the field under gen. Caswell. His appointment and instructions to join and co-operate with the regular forces had been announced to the Baron, who daily expected his arrival, and with him a considerable supply of provisions. Caswell however, upon the plea of preventing some disaffected inhabitants from taking arms in favor of the enemy, excused his not complying with the instructions; and as to the supply though promised, no part of it ever arrived. On the morning of July the 27th, gen. Gates marched at the head of the army, to effect a junction of the regular and irregular forces, to assume an appearance of hostile views upon the enemy's advanced posts, and in expectation of sharing with the militia the supplies they received from the state. The troops passed Deep river at the Buffalo-ford, and encamped in the afternoon at Spinks's farm on the road to Camden.

July
27.

Here we shall leave them till time and future operations yield us the materials for proceeding in the history of the southern department. However we must not quit North Carolina without mentioning, that Mr. Justice Pendleton stated to lord Cornwallis, in a letter dated

New-

Newbern, July 20, the reasons that urged him to leave ^{1780.} Charlestown without the permission of the commandant, left the same should be represented as a breach of his parole, and of course infamous and dishonorable. The letter relates, that the morning of the day the justice left the town, he was informed, that the preceding night a party had assembled together to take him out of his house and put him to death; and that it would certainly have been effected, had not a British officer, capt. Constable, prevailed on them to consider further of the matter. To show his utmost reliance on his lordship's honor, he says in it—"I will immediately return to my parole in Charlestown, if I obtain your promise that no further injury or insult shall be offered me. I require no other security." He then adds—"There are many English officers, my lord, that have intelligent and generous spirits, that know it is impossible to fix any immutable standard of opinion in politics, any more than religion; and therefore not impossible that a very upright and virtuous man may be a member of congress, governor, judge, &c. notwithstanding the common epithet of rebel so freely bestowed on them. Such men (it is no matter which side their principles lead them to embrace) behold human misery in every shape, or from whatever cause derived, with pity and concern, and by compassion and politeness endeavour to soften and mitigate it: but the malignity and virulence of Scotch (with some few exceptions) and American refugee officers (with none at all) whether in a civil or military line, is singularly conspicuous throughout this war, and cannot be described but in terms offensive to the pen of a gentleman."

The

1780. The proceedings of congress must now again engage our attention.

The grand council of the American states called upon each, in February, for specific supplies of provision and forage. But before these could be brought in, such advantage was taken of the public wants, that the nominal debt of the continent was increased beyond calculation. Depreciation was rapid. The enemy took courage, and set every engine to work, by counterfeiting and multiplying their base emissions, to decry the credit of the paper currency. Congress, to baffle their designs and curb intestine avarice, resolved on the 18th of March, to call in by taxes in the course of one year, and to burn all the paper bills heretofore emitted to the amount of 200 million of dollars, and in lieu thereof to issue ten millions of new money, which was to be issued as fast and no faster than the old was brought in. For every 20 dollars of the old, one dollar of the new emission was to be perfected, and lodged in the continental loan offices in the respective states. These new bills were to be redeemable in specie, within six years after the present, and to bear an interest at the rate of 3 per cent. to be paid also in specie at the redemption of the bills, or at the election of the owner annually, in sterling bills of exchange on the American commissioners in Europe, at four shillings and sixpence per dollar. The new bills were to issue on funds of individual states, established for the purpose. As the said bills were completed, the states respectively on whose funds they issued were to receive six tenths of them, and the remainder was to be subject to the orders of the United States, and credited to the states on whose funds they issued. These bills
were

were to be receivable in the payment of the monthly ^{1780.} quotas or taxes of each state, at the same rate with specie, or of one Spanish milled dollar, in lieu of forty dollars of the old bills still in circulation. By this political contrivance of congress, various effects were produced. The value of the new bills was to be really double to that of the old. The last were estimated at forty for a specie dollar, the first at par with specie: thus ten millions of new were equivalent to 400 millions of the old. The several states had a bait held out to them to induce their adoption of the plan; in that each was to receive six tenths of the new for its own use, while the remaining four were subject to the orders of congress. Those who had amassed large quantities of the old, were disappointed in their hopes of converting it into specie, dollar for dollar; notwithstanding all the fine and expressive language in the circular letter of congress the last September, strongly tending to encourage such hopes. The real injustice of subjecting all the inhabitants to the redemption of the old paper in specie at par, when the generality of the holders received it at a considerable depreciation, and when a large quantity of it was not circulated in the first instance but in a depreciated condition, was so apparent; that the avoidance of it by the resolution of congress produced no convulsion, though there was a violation of public faith. Many suffering individuals complained loudly, but the measure was peaceably adopted. Congress have also fixed the value of certificates given for money loaned from September 1777 to March 1780, so rating the value of the continental paper between those two periods, as that the lender might receive the value of what was lent, and the public not
be

1780. be loaded with a debt for which it had not an equivalent. On the 20th of March, they resolved upon recommending it to the states, to revise their laws, making the continental bills a tender for the discharge of debts and contracts, and to amend the same so as shall be judged most conducive to justice in the present state of the paper currency.

A few particulars that chiefly respect the Massachusetts and New Hampshire states remain to be related.

When the Hampshire house of assembly (about sixty representatives being present) debated at Exeter in what way to raise their quota of men, a certain mode was proposed. About a dozen voted for it; however, no persons voting against it when called upon, the act of the former was declared to be a vote, and the measure established. But in case of its proving disgustful to their constituents, almost every member of the house could say, that he did not vote for it, which would pass with the inattentive for a sufficient apology.

The towns and districts of the Massachusetts, by the direction of the general court, made choice of delegates for the sole purpose of settling *a constitution for the commonwealth*, who met in convention at Cambridge on the 1st of September 1779, and continued by adjournments

Mar. to the 2d of last March: when having agreed upon a
2. form of government, they submitted it to the revision of their constituents, in order to the completing of the same at a session to be held at Boston for that purpose, on the first Wednesday of the following June. Copies were ordered to be sent to the selectmen of each town, and the committees of each plantation, to be laid before

their respective inhabitants. If the major part of them, 1780. when legally assembled on the business, disapproved of any particular clause, they were to state their objections distinctly, with the reasons. The same were to be transmitted to the secretary of the convention, together with the number of voters in the said town and plantation meetings, on each side of every question; that so the convention, at the adjournment, might collect the general sense of their constituents on the several parts of the proposed constitution. If there did not appear to be two thirds of their constituents in favor of it, the convention were to alter it so as that it might be agreeable to the sentiments of two thirds of the voters through the state. It was also recommended to the inhabitants to empower their delegates at the next session, to agree upon a time when the form of government should take place, without returning the same again to the people; *provided*, that two thirds of the male inhabitants of the age of twenty-one years and upward, voting in the several meetings, agreed to the same, or the convention conformed it to the sentiments of two thirds of their constituents. When the convention met on the 7th of June as proposed, they agreed upon the last Wednesday of October, the 25th, for the commencement of the new form of government; as it appeared upon examination, that more than two thirds of the voters approved of it. Directions have been given for the election of governor, lieut. governor, &c. according to the mode prescribed by it against that memorable day. The constitution consists of two parts—a declaration of rights—and the frame of government. Upon reading it, you

will

1780. will probably pronounce it equal, if not superior to any upon the continent.

Notwithstanding all the anxieties and avocations attending the war wherein they were engaged, the Massachusetts general court passed an act to incorporate and establish a society for the cultivation and promotion of the arts and sciences, by the name of—THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES. The number of the said academy, who are inhabitants of the state, are not to be at any time more than two hundred, nor less than forty. A bill to the like purpose was brought into the house in a former session; but the names of the gentlemen inserted being unintentionally arranged by the persons draughting it, so as seemingly to give pre-eminence to another before Mr. Hancock, the last declared in the house against having any concern in it, and it fell to the ground: but an alphabetical arrangement in the new one removing the umbrage, the same passed into an act.

June 5. The court agreed upon raising 3934 men for the continental army for six months; and on the 22d, 4726 more for three months, and the men were to be paid in gold or silver, or bills equivalent thereto. The selectmen of the several towns were ordered to collect shirts, shoes, stockings, &c. and subjected to penalties in case of non-compliance. They were also directed to draught and procure men. But notwithstanding these promising exertions, the general court will not have furnished gen. Washington by the beginning of August with men sufficient to make good the state deficiency; for by his returns of the 23d, 5117 were wanting to complete the Massachusetts battalions. That they might furnish the provisions required by congress, they determined to borrow

row hard money upon the estates, or the parts of estates of absentees, wherewith to make the purchases; and on the same day resolved, that in case the monthly supplies of beef and grain agreed upon, could not be procured by purchase, the same should be impressed. It was high time for something effectual to be done: for the Massachusetts and New Hampshire lines at and about West Point, though but a handful of men, had at times been many days without bread, on others without meat, and a long while on half allowance; and the officers in the same condition with the privates, having no money to purchase necessaries. New York, though consuming at both ends, and bleeding at every pore, had her compliment of continental troops in the field; beside having raised in the month of May 800 new levies to guard the frontiers. On the 21st of that month, Sir John Johnson made his appearance at Johnson-hall. He and his party the next day burnt about 33 houses and out-houses, together with a mill; destroyed cattle and sheep; and killed about a dozen persons. After digging up his plate, he marched off. While New York was thus suffering, and still exerting herself, several of her sister states that were in full and peaceable possession of their territories, seemingly slept in security, and had not a third of their quota of men in the field.

The American cruisers have been sending in occasionally valuable prizes to different ports; and the people of Boston particularly have been lately in high spirits, having heard within this fortnight, that nineteen ships of a very rich outward bound Quebec fleet were captured, and that the privateers were in pursuit of the

1780. remainder. Several of them will undoubtedly be brought safe into one or other of the states *.

L E T T E R XII.

Rotterdam, Aug. 26, 1780.

FRIEND G.

1779-
Nov.
25.

HIS British majesty went to the house of peers, and opened the session of parliament. The royal speech was totally silent with respect to America and the West Indies: but stiled the present, one of the most dangerous confederacies that ever was formed against the crown and people of Great Britain. It recommended to the lords and commons the consideration of what further advantages might be extended to the kingdom of Ireland, by such regulations as may effectually promote the interests of all the British dominions. The necessity of the recommendation was evident from what had already happened upon the meeting of the Irish parliament in October. The further proceedings of the people of Ireland discovered a determination to secure to themselves substantial benefits from a crisis so peculiarly favorable to the views of the patriotic party. The associators being jealous, that if the supplies were granted as usual for two years, a sudden prorogation of parliament would put an end to all hope of amicable redress

* About fourteen were brought in.

for the present, called out for a short money bill of six ¹⁷⁷⁹ months only, and it became the general cry of Ireland. The representatives at length found, that it was indispensably requisite for them to comply; and the short money bill was accordingly passed. A necessity equally convincing, secured the passage of that humiliating and mortifying act in Great Britain on the 17th of December. Six days after, the king gave his assent to a bill for granting a free trade to Ireland. The golden opportunity admitting of it, the people of that kingdom have proceeded so far as absolutely to deny the right of the British parliament to bind that country in any case whatever.

Government received advice on the 18th of December, that the fort of St. Ferdinando de Omoa, the key to the bay of Honduras, had been taken about the 20th of October, by the troops under the command of capt. William Dalrymple, who had been sent by the governor of Jamaica to the Musquito shore. The men by the help of ladders scaled the walls, though 28 feet high, and thus made themselves masters of the fort. Two register ships, with the cargoes of other vessels of note, worth three millions of dollars, were also taken. All was gained with the loss only of about 20 killed and wounded on the British side, and very few more on the side of the Spaniards.

Intelligence having been transmitted to the British ¹⁷⁸⁵ administration, [by some, it is thought, whose duty bound them to keep the secrets of the Dutch councils] that a number of Dutch ships, laden with timber and naval stores for the French service, in order to escape the danger of British cruisers, accompanied count By-

1780. land, who was to escort a convoy to the Mediterranean, capt. Fielding was sent out with a proper force to examine the convoy, and to seize any vessels containing those articles, which the British deemed contraband. On the meeting of the fleets, capt. Fielding desired permission to visit the merchant ships; being refused, he dispatched his boats for that purpose, which were fired at: the captain then fired a shot ahead of the Dutch admiral, who answered it by a broadside. Count Byland having received another in return, and being in no condition to pursue the contest further, immediately struck his colours. Most of the ships which occasioned the contest, had already, through the length and darkness of the night, and by keeping in with the shore, escaped the danger, and proceeded without interruption to the French ports. The few that remained with naval stores on board were stopped; and the Dutch admiral was then informed, that he might hoist his colours and prosecute his voyage: he did the first, but declined the other, and accompanied the British Squadron to Spithead the fourth of January; where he remained till he received fresh instructions from his masters.

Jan
4.

The right (whether supported by actual treaties or not) which the British claimed and exercised over the vessels of foreign powers, though not at war with them, when they suspected or found that they were laden either with naval stores, and bound to the ports of their enemies, or with the property of the latter, suggested the idea of an armed neutrality. One of the diplomatic body assured my friend at Paris, that the sagacious king of Sweden communicated the first hint of it to count Panin, with whom it slept for some time before it was

mentioned to the empress of Russia. At length it was ^{1780.} matured; and on the 26th of February, the court of Petersburg issued a manifesto or declaration, which has been the mean of forming, under the name of *an armed neutrality*, a naval and military alliance and confederacy between Russia and other neutral powers. The great principle of the piece, and of the confederacy to which it has given birth, is, that *free bottoms make free goods*; and is thus particularized—"Neutral ships shall enjoy a free navigation even from port to port, and on the coasts of the belligerent powers:—All effects belonging to the subjects of the said belligerent powers shall be looked upon as free, on board such neutral ships, except only such goods as are stipulated contraband:—In order to determine what characterizes a port blocked up [into which neutral ships are not to have free ingress] that denomination shall not be granted, but to such places, before which there are actually a number of enemy's ships stationed near enough, so as to make its entry dangerous." Great Britain is not in a situation directly to contravene this grand principle, so that it will probably be henceforth settled as a part of the law of nations, in many respects essentially differing from what has, for several hundred years, been established among commercial kingdoms.

The courts of France and Spain have expressed the utmost approbation of the Russian system contained in the empress's declaration, so exactly calculated, and immediately suited to their own views. The court of London being obliged to suppress her indignation at an injury, which she was neither able to resent nor remedy, worded the answer to the declaration, sent to the British

1780. envoy at Peterburgh on the 13th of April, with the greatest caution, and promised to "redress every hardship that may happen, in so equitable a manner, that her imperial majesty shall be perfectly satisfied, and acknowledge a like spirit of justice which she herself possesses." On the 3d of April, prince Gallitzin, the Russian envoy extraordinary at the Hague, remitted to the president of the States General a memorial with the copy of the declaration, inviting their high mightinesses to accede to an armed neutrality, and acquainting them, that the like invitation had been given to the courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm and Lisbon. But the court of London determined upon adopting special measures, in order to prevent the accession of the republic to the confederacy, and to induce her to afford the succours that had been demanded: an order of the king in council was therefore published on the 17th. It relates, that though their high mightinesses had been strongly called upon by a memorial of the 21st of March, to grant the succours stipulated by treaty, they had not signified any intention of complying. The non-performance of the stipulated engagements is pronounced a desertion of the alliance subsisting between the two countries; and it is thence declared, that upon every principle of wisdom and justice, the republic must be considered on the same footing with other neutral states not privileged by treaty. The order therefore suspends, provisionally and till further orders, all the particular stipulations respecting the subjects of the States General, contained in the several treaties now subsisting. The publication did not produce the desired effects. The different provinces, after continued deliberations, were unanimously of opinion, that it

was necessary for their high mightinesses to excuse themselves from furnishing the succours claimed by Great Britain; that convoys should be granted to protect effectually all trading ships bearing the flag of the republic, whatever may be their cargoes, excepting only such goods as are properly expressed in the treaties to be contraband; and that the invitation of the empress of Russia should be accepted with gratitude. They highly resent in general the violence committed upon their convoy by capt. Fielding, in the execution of his orders, and the condemnation of the ships and cargoes carried by him into the British ports.

Different transactions now demand our notice.

A convoy of about 26 ships sailed from Marseilles for the West Indies under the care of the Aurora. Between 8 and 9 in the morning on the 18th of December, they were discovered by the Preston being between Martinico and St. Lucie; upon her making the signal for a fleet, the British ships in Gros Islet bay slipped their cables by order of Sir Hyde Parker and chased. Before four in the afternoon, about ten of the convoy run themselves on shore, and were set on fire by the men of war's boats. The next morning the Boreas was engaged with the French frigate in Fort Royal bay. On that, Mr. de la Motte Piquet suddenly slipped his cables, put out to sea with three ships, bore down upon and obliged the Boreas to sheer off. By this dexterous manœuvre he saved the Aurora and some of the merchant ships. The French admiral then hauled his wind in good time, and kept plying for the road, which he gained. The British however had captured nine sail, beside those they burnt. Within a few days after they took three French frigates

1780 of 42, 36 and 28 guns, on their passage from St. Vincent's to Martinico. On the 20th of March, as the French admiral was convoying a number of merchant ships, with four ships of the line and a frigate, he fell in with capt. Cornwallis off Monti Christi, whom he chased and came up with in the evening. He maintained a running fight with the British ships, of 64, 50, and 44 guns during the whole night. The next morning a general engagement took place, which lasted between two and three hours. The French suffered so that they were obliged to lie by and repair. They then renewed the chase, and continued it during the night. But the appearance of the Ruby man of war of 64 guns, with two British frigates, the following day, changed the face of affairs. The French were now chased in turn for several hours, as they declined coming to action. They were superior in the size of their ships, and the weight and number of their guns; but as the British had a ship more, the admiral would not risk the loss of any of his convoy, by renewing the engagement.

Sir George Rodney was appointed to the chief command in the West Indies; and had orders to proceed in his way thither, with a strong squadron to the relief of Gibraltar; which had been so closely blockaded by the Spaniards ever since the commencement of hostilities between them and the British, that the garrison was reduced to considerable distress, as well with respect to provisions, as to military and garrison stores. After being a few days at sea, he fell in with a considerable convoy, bound from St. Sebastian to Cadiz, consisting of 15 sail of merchantmen, under the guard of a 64 gun ship, 4 frigates from 26 to 32 guns, and two smaller armed vessels.

vessels. The whole fleet was taken. The capture was exceedingly fortunate, much the greater part of the vessels being laden with wheat, flour and other provision, the remainder with bale goods and naval stores. The admiral sent the former to Gibraltar, the latter to Great Britain. About a week after, he fell in with a Spanish Squadron of eleven ships of the line under Don Juan Langara, off Cape St. Vincent. The enemy being much inferior in force, endeavoured to avoid an engagement. On that, Sir George threw out the signal for a general chase, with orders to engage as the ships came up by rotation, taking at the same time the lee gage, to prevent the enemy's retreat into their own ports. The engagement was began by the headmost ships about four o'clock in the evening: their fire was returned by the Spaniards with great spirit and resolution. The night was dark, tempestuous and dismal, and the fleet being nearly involved among the shoals of St. Lucar, rendered the aspect more terrible. Early in the action, the Spanish ship San Domingo, of 70 guns and 600 men, blew up, and all on board perished. The action and pursuit continued till two in the morning, when the headmost of the enemy's line struck to Sir George. The Spanish admiral's ship of 80 guns, with three of 70, were taken and carried safely into port. The San Julian of 70, commanded by the marquis de Medina, was taken; the officers were shifted, and a lieutenant with 70 British seamen put on board; but by running on shore the victors became prisoners. Another ship of the same force was also taken, and afterward totally lost by running upon the breakers. Two more escaped greatly damaged, and two less so into Cadiz.

1780. The Spanish admiral behaved with the greatest gallantry. He was himself sorely wounded; and before he struck to capt. Macbride, his ship the Phoenix was nearly a wreck. A malignant kind of small pox prevailing on board the Bienfaisant, capt. Macbride, that humane and brave officer, disdaining to convey infection even to an enemy, and perhaps considering the peculiar terror with which it is regarded by the Spaniards, and the general ill aspect it bears to that people, acquainted Don Langara with the circumstance and his own feelings on the subject; and at the same time offered (that so the danger which would attend shifting the prisoners might be prevented) to trust to the admiral's honor, that neither his officers nor men, amounting to above 700, should in case of separation or otherwise, in any degree interrupt the British seamen sent on board, whether with respect to navigating the ship, or defending her against whatever enemy. The proposal was thankfully embraced, and the conditions strictly adhered to by the Spanish admiral; for though there was no other ship but the Bienfaisant in sight, and though the sea and weather were exceeding rough, his people gave every assistance in refitting the Phoenix, and in navigating her to the bay of Gibraltar.

Sir George having executed his commission at Gibraltar, proceeded about the middle of February to the West Indies, leaving the bulk of the fleet, together with the Spanish prizes, on their way to Great Britain, under the conduct of admiral Digby. The returning fleet fell in with a considerable French convoy, most of which escaped, only the Prothee of 64 guns and two or three vessels laden with military stores being taken.

The

The Spanish governor of Louisiana, Don Bernardo de Galvez, having succeeded in his expedition against the British settlements and forces on the Mississippi, extended his views, and concerted a plan with the governor of the Havannah, in pursuance of which he was to be reinforced early in the present year, by a considerable embarkation from that place. De Galvez, concluding that the expected force was on its passage, embarked all the force he could raise, and proceeded on his expedition under the convoy of some small frigates and other armed vessels. After a continued struggle with adverse and stormy weather, and other impediments for near a month, six ships ran upon a sand bank in the channel of the bay of Mobile, three of which were lost though the crews were saved. The commander had the further mortification, on reviewing his troops, to find, that there were about 800 who had been shipwrecked and had saved only their persons. The greatest part of the whole were naked, and much of the provision, ammunition and artillery, was lost. The Spaniards bore their misfortunes with patience; and instead of shrinking under discouragements, endeavoured to convert their loss into a benefit, by breaking up their wrecked vessels, and framing out of them ladders and other machines necessary for an escalade. Those who had preserved their arms, divided them with such as had none, so as to make them the most useful: and they that still remained unarmed, undertook the laborious service of the army. De Galvez had no reason to repent his perseverance. He was strengthened by the arrival of four armed vessels from the Havannah, with a part of the regiment of Nayarre on board. This arrival, with a quantity of artillery,

artillery, stores, and various necessaries, afforded a sudden renovation of vigor and life to every thing. The former troops were speedily reembarked, and after a fresh encounter with new storms, difficulties and dangers, the

Feb. 25. whole were landed within three leagues of Mobile. Mr. Durnford, a captain of engineers and lieutenant governor of West Florida, commanded the poor garrison, amounting to 284, including regulars, royalists, artillery men, seamen, 54 inhabitants and 31 armed negroes. On the 12th of March the Spaniards opened their battery, consisting of eight 18, and one 24 pounder.

Mar. 14. By sun set the garrison hung out a white flag; the capitulation however was not signed till the 14th in the morning, when they surrendered prisoners of war. The surrender appeared inevitable, but was attended with circumstances exceedingly vexatious to the British. Gen. Campbell had marched from Pensacola, (as the Spaniards say) with 1100 regulars and some artillery for their relief, and was accompanied by some Indians. The van of Campbell's force was at no great distance from the Spanish camp, when the fort was capitulating; and the Spaniards used the utmost precaution and expedition, in taking possession of and covering themselves with the works, that they might be secured against an attack. De Galvez boasted, that the British forces in the field and garrison were superior in number to his own, and scrupled not to declare openly, that with the smallest activity and vigor in their works, the garrison might have made good their defence until the arrival of the succour. But it seems as though the lieut. governor had not, from the beginning, the smallest idea of any attempt being made for the relief of the place; and accordingly,

on the appearance of the enemy, he considered its loss ¹⁷⁸⁰ as a matter of course, and inevitable necessity.

Sir George Rodney arrived at Gros Islet bay on the 27th of March. The French admiral de Guichen, having put to sea from Martinico with a fleet of 23 sail of the line and a 50 gun ship, Sir George speedily pursued him with 20 ships of the line and the Centurion. The French were brought to action by some of his headmost ships, a little before one o'clock; and about the same ^{April 17-} hour, he himself in the Sandwich of 90 guns, commenced the action in the centre. After beating three ships out of the line, he was at length encountered alone by Mr. de Guichen in the Couronne of the same force, supported by his two seconds. The Sandwich sustained the unequal combat for an hour and a half, when the French commander with his seconds bore away, whereby the French line of battle was totally broke in the centre. The great distance of the British van and rear from their own centre, and the crippled condition of several of their ships, and the particularly dangerous state of the Sandwich, rendered an immediate pursuit impossible. The French took shelter under Guadaloupe, and Sir George his station off Fort Royal. In his public letter he spoke of de Guichen as a brave and gallant officer, and as having the honor of being nobly supported during the whole action; but commended none of the British officers, except those of the Sandwich; though it appears from his list, that while the Sandwich had 18 killed and 51 wounded, the Cornwall, capt. Edwards, had 21 killed and 49 wounded; the Trident, capt. Molloy, had 14 killed and 26 wounded; and the Conqueror, adm. Rowley's ship, capt. Waton, had 13 killed and

1780. 36 wounded: capt. St. John of the Intrepid, and three of his lieutenants, were killed, out of seven belonging to said ship. Sir George kept his station for some time, and then returned to St. Lucie. On receiving fresh intelligence of de Guichen's approach to the windward of Martinico, he put to sea and got sight of his fleet the 10th of May. The French had it constantly in their power to bring on an engagement, and as constantly avoided it: but in the course of their manœuvring they had nearly been entangled, and were saved from a close and general action only by a critical shift of the wind; and even with that aid, and all the sails they could carry, their rear was not entirely preserved from conflict about seven in the evening of the 15th.
- May 15. After this they took care to keep at a greater distance. The vigorous efforts of Sir George so involved the fleets
19. on the 19th, that the French, for the preservation of their rear, were under the necessity of hazarding a partial engagement, by which, having extricated their rear, they bore away with all the sail they could possibly press, and got into Martinico. Sir George sent three of his fleet to St. Lucie, and stood with the remainder toward Barbadoes.

Before the Christmas recess of parliament, the duke of Richmond made a speech on the necessity of practising the most rigid œconomy, in order to extricate the country from its many difficulties; which was followed by a motion for an address to his majesty, representing that a considerable reduction of his civil list would be an example well becoming his paternal affection for his people, and his own dignity. The motion was rejected by a majority of more than two to one. This was fol-

lowed

lowed some days after, by a successful motion of lord Shelburne, the purport of which was, to consider of the appointment of a committee for inquiring into the several parts of the public expenditure, as also of the reductions or savings that could be made with consistency. In the house of commons Mr. Burke proposed a plan of oeconomy and reform; and gave notice of his intending to bring it shortly before them, as a business that was become indispensable. Schemes of oeconomy and reform were highly adapted to the prevailing taste of the nation as was soon apparent; for during the recess of parliament, the business of public meetings, of petitions to the house of commons, and of associations for the redress of grievances, was commenced. The adoption of these means for procuring a reform in the executive departments of the state soon became very general; and the minds of the public being agitated and warmed by these meetings, the views of many persons of no mean weight and consequence were extended still further. They gradually began to consider, that nothing less than shortening the duration of parliament, and the obtaining a more equal representation of the people, could reach to a perfect cure of the present, and afford an effectual preservative against the return of similar evils.

The large, populous and opulent county of York, led the way and set the example to the rest of the kingdom. A very numerous and respectable meeting of the gentlemen, clergy and freeholders, including persons of the first consideration and property, was held at the city of York on the 30th of last December. Their petition to the house of commons was unanimously agreed upon, and accompanied

1780. accompanied with a resolution, that a committee of sixty-one gentlemen be appointed, to carry on the necessary correspondence for effectually promoting the object of the petition; and likewise to prepare a plan of an association, on legal and constitutional grounds, to support a laudable reform, and such other measures as may conduce to restore the freedom of parliament.

Jan.
7.

The counties of Middlesex and Hants stood forth as the seconds of Yorkshire; and adopted similar measures. The example was soon followed by the county palatine of Chester; and in a close succession of time, by the counties of Herts, Suffex, Huntingdon, Surrey, Cumberland, Bedford, Essex, Somerset, Gloucester, Wilts, Dorset, Devon, Norfolk, Berks, Bucks, Nottingham, Kent, Northumberland, Suffolk, Hereford, Cambridge and Derby. The Welsh counties of Denbigh, Flint and Brecknock; likewise petitioned, as did the cities of London, Westminster, York, Bristol, Gloucester, and Hereford, with the towns of Nottingham, Reading, Cambridge, Bridgewater, and Newcastle upon Tyne. Northamptonshire declined petitioning, but voted resolutions and instructions to their representatives, including the purport of the petitions. The measure of forming committees and entering into associations, was a great stumbling block in some of the counties, and was omitted by several. The members of administration and men in office, were not wholly deficient in their endeavours to prevent the county meetings: but they were generally overborne by the torrent.

Feb.
8.

The Yorkshire petition, subscribed by upward of eight thousand freeholders, was the first presented. Sir George Saville introduced it, and in his speech said—

“ It

"It was first moved in a meeting of six hundred gentle- 1780.
men and upward. In the hall where that petition was
conceived, there was more property than in the walls of
this house" of commons. The freeholders comprised
within the compass of that single hall, possessed landed
property to the amount of eight hundred thousand
pounds sterling a year. The house of commons took April
into consideration the petitions of the people of England
and Wales, amounting to about forty, and signed by
above a hundred thousand electors. Mr. Dunning
opened the business in an accurate and weighty speech,
and then moved—"That the influence of the crown
has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished."
The lord advocate of Scotland, to obtain a negative,
moved an amendment in the following words—"That it
is now necessary to declare;" the opposition readily
agreed to it, and the question thus amended was carried
by a majority of 18—233 to 215. Mr. Dunning then
moved a second proposition—"That it is competent
to this house to examine into, and to correct abuses in
the expenditure of the civil list revenues, as well as in
every other branch of the public revenue, whenever it
shall seem expedient to the wisdom of this house so to
do;" which was carried without a division. Mr. Thomas
Pitt then moved the following resolution—"That it is
the opinion of this committee, that it is the duty of
this house to provide, as far as may be, an immediate
and effectual redress of the abuses complained of in the
petitions presented to this house, from the different
counties, cities and towns in this kingdom;" which was
carried in the affirmative without any apparent dissent.
The

1780. The house which had been in a committee, being resumed, Mr. Fox moved that the resolutions should be immediately reported. This was opposed by the minister with all the force he yet retained; but the stream was too strong to be resisted. The resolutions were severally reported and received, agreed to and confirmed by the house without a division. Such was the complete and decisive victory gained by the opposition, in behalf of the petitions on that extraordinary and memorable day. Without doors, the joy and triumph in most parts of England was great and general; and perhaps would scarcely have been exceeded on occasion of the completest victory over a foreign enemy.

April 24. A motion of Mr. Dunning's which had been postponed was taken up. It was for an address to his majesty, requesting that he would not dissolve the parliament, nor prorogue the present session, until proper measures should be taken by that house, to diminish the influence of the crown, and to correct the other evils complained of in the petitions of the people. After great and long debates the motion was rejected by a majority of 51—254 to 203. Thus all hopes of obtaining any redress for the people in that house, was at an end. But though the *freemen* of England could obtain no relief from their burdens by a house of representatives; the *non-freemen* of France were relieved by their grand monarch, who issued several edicts for the better administration of his finances, and for the suppression of divers places and offices.

The committee in London for raising and applying monies for the relief of the American prisoners, began in March to call upon the public afresh for new subscriptions;

scriptions, as the war continued beyond expectation: 1780.
the same were readily made. Many individuals exhibited a compassion and liberality to the Americans, that does honor to human nature.

On the 28th of April, Don Joseph Solano sailed from Cadiz with 12 ships of the line and several frigates, and convoyed a fleet of 83 transports, having eight regiments of Spanish infantry, of two battalions each, and a considerable train of artillery on board: the whole land force, including 100 engineers, amounted to 11,460 effective men. They are to join the French in the West Indies; and in that case will bring the British fleets and islands into the most imminent danger. Jamaica is generally supposed to be the first and principal object. 284

In the beginning of June, the cities of London and Westminster were convulsed from end to end, by some of the most extraordinary risings that ever happened. When the law for relieving the English Roman catholics was passed in May 1778, a number of persons in Scotland, actuated by a mistaken zeal, associated for the preservation of the protestant religion, and called themselves a *protestant association*, at the head of which was a lord George Gordon. The associators became so formidable, that the Scotch papists were greatly alarmed, and begged that the laws relating to them might not be altered. The success which had attended the association in North Britain, might give the hint for forming a similar one in London, to those whose jealousy for the protestant interest was increased by the apparent growth of popery, which of late years had been esteemed very considerable. A society accordingly was formed in the metropolis, which in a few months gathered great con-

1780. sequence from the numbers that professed their adherence to the cause it supported; and lord George Gordon was elected president. The first object of the association, after a committee had been chosen, was to draw up and present a petition to the house of commons, requesting a repeal of the above law. The petition was publicly advertised to be signed by all who approved of it. The alarm which the act gave, had reached various parts of the kingdom, and similar petitions came from many of them, most of which were presented to the house by lord George. The associators met at Coach-maker's hall, when the president addressed them for half an hour. His speech was received with the loudest acclamations, on which his lordship moved the following resolution—"That the whole body of the protestant association do attend in St. George's-fields, on Friday next at ten o'clock in the morning, to accompany his lordship to the house of commons, on the delivery of the protestant petition;" which was carried unanimously. His lordship then informed them, that if he was attended by less than 20,000 men on the appointed day, he would not present their petition. He also directed that they should be formed in four divisions, three of which were to answer to their belonging either to London, to Westminster or Southwark, the fourth was to be composed wholly of his own countrymen the Scots, resident in London and its environs. To prevent mistakes, the whole were to be distinguished by blue cockades.

June 2. The grand divisions of the associators being drawn by different routes from the rendezvous, filled the ways through which they marched in ranks, with a multitude that excited wonder and alarm. When arrived at the

the place of destination, they occupied the streets and 1780, avenues to both houses, and soon began to compel the members to cry out—"no popery," to wear blue cockades, and some to promise their assistance for the repeal of the new popery act as they called it. Upon the appearance of the prelates and court lords, their violence increased to the highest pitch; and several of them were treated with the greatest indignities: the lives of two were in imminent danger. It is impossible to describe the astonishment, sense of degradation, horror and dismay, which prevailed in both houses. Mean while lord George Gordon having obtained leave to bring up the petition, afterward moved for its being taken into consideration. This brought on a debate, and the associators being in possession of the lobby, the commons were kept confined for several hours before they could divide on the question. The arrival of the magistrates and guards having removed the impediment, it was rejected by a majority of 196 to six only. Before the rising of the house, several parties filed off, and proceeded to the demolition of the insides of the chapels belonging to the Sardinian and Bavarian ministers. The commons adjourned to the 6th; but the lords met on the following day, and agreed on an address requesting the king to give immediate orders for prosecuting the authors and abettors of the outrages. On the 4th the mob assembled in and about Moorfields, and repeated their outrages on a Romish chapel and school in the neighbourhood. The military were present, having been sent for; but the lord mayor, through timidity, would neither order them to act, nor venture to interfere with the civil power that attended him. Toward

1780. the evening of the next day, different parties collected and attacked various houses. Between twelve and one o'clock at night, a large body assembled before Sir George Saville's house, and after breaking all the windows, stripped it of the most valuable furniture, which they burnt before the door. They dispersed on the arrival of a party of horse.

June
6.

About two hundred members had the courage to make their way into the house, through the vast crowds that filled the streets, and that were interlaced and surrounded by large detachments of the military on foot and horseback. They passed some resolutions; but intelligence being received of the conflagrations which were commenced in the city, a hasty adjournment took place. Some of the lords met, but soon adjourned to the 19th. It was observed of the mob which surrounded the parliament house this day, that it consisted of different persons from those who attended the petition on the Friday, being composed almost wholly of men and boys of the lowest rank. Early in the afternoon, the keeper of Newgate was informed by a small party, that the jail would be forced open, if the rioters confined in it, were not released at a certain hour when applied for. He acquainted his civil superiors with it, who neglected the precaution of sending a few armed men, who with a sufficient stock of powder and ball might, from the top of the prison walls, have defended it against all the rioters. About seven in the evening, they came and demanded the release of their comrades; which not being complied with, they took all the jailer's furniture, piled it before the prison door and burned it: they also fired his house, carried off their comrades in triumph, set at liberty

berty all the other prisoners to the number of about 300, 1780. and fired the inside of the jail which was wholly consumed. They afterward went to New-prison Clerkenwell, and to Clerkenwell Bridewell, and released the several prisoners at these places. From the moment that the great number of prisoners was let loose, the spirit of the depredations took a different turn. Religion was no longer the sole subject of resentment; the jails, the police, and plunder were also incentives. A party appeared before justice Fielding's house about midnight, and breaking into every room, seized all they could meet with, brought the same into the street, and making three fires, the whole was consumed. Another party went to lord Mansfield's. All the furniture, his lordship's invaluable papers and library of books, his pictures, and every moveable, was brought into the street and burnt; after which the house itself was set on fire. A party of the guards fired on the mob several times, and a few were killed and several wounded; but the conflagration was not thereby prevented, nor would the rioters disperse till the destruction was completed. Many other houses belonging to papists were also destroyed.

The directors of the bank took the precaution to obtain in time a party of soldiers to secure that grand repository of the national treasure: which was a happy circumstance, as the attention of the mob was invited toward it by a paragraph in one of the public papers, mentioning that the papists had carried all their plate to the bank for security: though this was false, the assertion was calculated to produce the same effects as if true. It is said, that the officer who commanded the soldiers was jealous, whether he could depend upon them in

1780. case of an emergency, because of their being chiefly Scotch, and possessing the national bigotry of their country against the act for relieving the papists. He was glad when freed from his apprehensions, by the arrival of the militia in the metropolis.

June

7.

The house of commons met at twelve, but instantly adjourned to the 19th. Though the military were pouring into the town on every side, the mob continued, even during the day time, in different parties. In the evening and night, the capital exhibited such a dreadful spectacle of calamity and horror, and experienced such real danger, terror and distress, as it had never before known. A vast number of rioters assembled before the Fleet prison in the evening, and set fire to its different apartments, so that it was wholly consumed. A party went from thence and burnt the distilleries and dwellings of Mr. Langdale in Holborn, who was a Roman catholic. The flames communicated to a number of adjacent houses, which were also consumed. Another party repaired to the King's-bench prison, which was burned after the prisoners had removed their effects. A different party that had assembled to the east of the city, and had burnt some houses in Whitecross-street, Houndsditch, &c. proceeded into it, and down Threadneedle-street with an intent of attacking the bank, but were fired upon by the soldiers, who killed several, and drove the rest back. Government observing that the magistracy of the city did not exert themselves in suppressing the riots (though individuals united in forming a military association which was of service) orders were issued from the adjutant-general's office, in obedience to an order of the king's council, for the military to act with-

out

out waiting for directions from the civil magistrates, and ^{1780.} to use force for dispersing the illegal and tumultuous assemblies of the people. When once the troops began to act with vigor agreeable to these orders, the different mobs were speedily suppressed, and the rioters scattered. But in the effecting of this service, 210 were killed, and 248 wounded, 75 of whom have died in hospitals.

During the night, the city was beheld from one spot, as reported, blazing in thirty-six different parts. Some of these conflagrations were truly tremendous from their magnitude. Of these, the burning remains of Newgate, the King's-bench prison, the new Bridewell in St. George's-fields, the Fleet prison, and the houses and great distilleries of Mr. Langdale, presented spectacles of the most dreadful nature. The natural darkness of the night, the gleam of the distant fires, the dreadful shouts of the rioters in different quarters, the frequent firings of the soldiers, and the groans of the dying, formed altogether a scene so dreadful that no description can easily reach.

London the next day presented in many places, the image of a city recently stormed and sacked. All business was at an end; houses and shops were shut up; the Royal Exchange, other public buildings, and the streets, were possessed and occupied by the troops; ruins were still burning and smoking; and a dreadful void and silence reigned, where scenes of the greatest hurry, and noise, and business were habitual. From this day the riots were totally at an end, and every thing remained quiet. A number of persons were taken up; and about five o'clock in the afternoon of Saturday the 10th, lord George Gordon was secured, conveyed to the horse

1780. guards, and between nine and ten conducted to the Tower.

June 15. The news of the taking of Charlestown arrived very opportunely for ministry a few days after, and served in a considerable degree to erase the memory of past disappointments, and to revive all the sanguine hopes of the speedy subjugation of the United States. But it did not prevent administration's being severely censured on account of the preceding disturbances. The mischiefs that had happened were charged to their neglect and delay, in not calling forth the civil power in time, and in not employing the military until it was too late. The censure passed upon them was amply counterbalanced by other effects that the riots produced. The scenes of enormity exhibited by the rioters, struck all men with horror; and inspiring a prevailing dread of popular meetings, however peaceable or legal, threw a general damp on all endeavours whatever for reformation. Thus the cause of ministry was eventually strengthened by a most disgraceful tumult, which for a while appeared to threaten the subversion of all government.

Notwithstanding Sir George Rodney's success in January, the siege of Gibraltar has been continued. The vigilance and industry of the Spaniards, in their endeavours to cut off all relief by sea, were redoubled; and the difficulty of supplying the garrison was continually increasing. They attempted by means of seven fire ships to burn the Panther and Experiment men of war, and a royal sloop that lay in the bay; of which the British commanders had not the smallest notice, till they were alarmed at one in the morning of June the 7th, by the approaching flames of the burning vessels. The

cap-

captains with the most immediate presence of mind, instantly manned their boats; and the officers and seamen with their usual intrepidity, met and grappled the fire-ships; and then amid the bursting of shells, and the horrors of a scene teeming with destruction, boldly towed them off, and ran them on different parts of the shore, after much labor and expence had been bestowed upon their equipment. 1780.

The empress of Russia, having accompanied the great duke and duchess on their way to make the tour of Europe, proceeded, according to a concerted appointment, to Mokilow in Poland, where she had an interview with the emperor of Germany in the month of June. After some stay there, the emperor accompanied the Czarina on her return to Petersburgh. When he had continued for a while in that city, he returned to Vienna, and was visited by the prince royal of Prussia. The king of Sweden made a visit about the same time to Holland.

Admiral Geary sailed from Spithead early in June with 23 ships of the line, and was afterward joined by five or six more; but he was not in time to prevent the junction of the French fleet from Brest with the Spaniards at Cadiz, by which the two nations have acquired such a superiority as affords them the apparent dominion of the European seas. The admiral however on the 4th July of July, fell in with a rich convoy from Port au Prince, of which he took 12 merchantmen; the rest, with the ships of war, escaped. 4

July 16, the *Belle Poule* frigate, commanded by the chevalier Kergariou, was taken by the *Nonsuch* of 64 guns, Sir James Wallace captain, after an obstinate defence 16
fence

1780. fence of more than two hours. The chevalier and 24 men were killed; and about 40 wounded.

Mr. John Adams and Mr. Francis Dana his secretary, arrived in Spain about the middle of last December, after a very narrow escape. The frigate on board of which they were, it was thought would have foundered at sea in less than forty-eight hours more. After a short stay they proceeded to France. Mr. Adams is now at Amsterdam, where he will undoubtedly employ his abilities in forwarding a treaty of commerce between the United Provinces of Holland, and the United States of America, which has been in agitation now near upon two years. As Mr. William Lee, whom congress had appointed commissioner to the courts of Vienna and Berlin, was on his way to the last city, with his secretary Mr. Samuel W. Stockton, he accidentally put up at an hotel in Aix-la-Chapelle, where Mr. John de Neufville happened to be, who hearing of them, and learning that they were Americans, joined company with them. Mr. de Neufville discoursed upon the subject of a commercial treaty. Mr. Lee had no powers to negotiate or sign any thing of the kind with the province or states of Holland: but he and his secretary agreed between themselves, that the measure should be ventured upon, could it be executed, as they had no doubt of its meeting with the approbation of congress. Mr. de Neufville consulted Mr. Van Berkel, the counsellor and pensionary of Amsterdam, and having received his directions proceeded to sign on the 4th of September 1778, the plan of a treaty of amity and commerce, as destined to be concluded hereafter between the states of Holland and the United States of America. Mr. de Neufville, being properly
autho-

authorized by the regency of Amsterdam, further engaged, that as long as America should not act contrary to the interest of the states of Holland, the city of Amsterdam would never adopt any measure that might tend to oppose the interest of America, but would on the contrary use all its influence upon the states of the seven United Provinces of Holland, to effect the desired connection. Though several copies of the plan were early sent to America, and the whole business has been for some time known to many, yet it appears to be still concealed from the British administration; while it is evidently different with respect to some of their councils. Mr. Adams wrote to congress from Amsterdam on the 23d of August—"Orders are sent to prosecute Aug. the war with vigor in North Carolina and Virginia the 23^d ensuing fall, winter and spring. Britain will yield to France and Spain very great things to carry their point against America; but all will not do. France and Spain are now responsible for their conduct to the rest of Europe; besides, the separation of America from England, is an object of more pressing importance than any concessions England can make them."

L E T T E R XIII.

Roxbury, Jan. 11, 1781.

THE military operations in South Carolina require an immediate detail. Col. Sumpter at the head of his party, made a spirited, though unsuccessful attack on

1780. on the British post at Rocky-mount on the 30th of July. He marched in quest of other royal detachments without delay, and on the 7th of August succeeded in an attack on their post at the Hanging-rock, where was a considerable force of regulars and Tories. The prince of Wales's regiment, which defended the place, was nearly annihilated; and a large body of Tories, that had advanced from North Carolina under Col. Brian, was completely dispersed. Col. Sumpter's party was so short of ammunition, that when the action commenced, not a man of it had more than ten bullets. In the latter part of the fight, the arms and ammunition taken from the British and Tories who fell in the beginning, were turned against their associates,

It being known that an American army was marching from the northward for the relief of their Southern brethren, the Whig militia, on the extremities of the state, formed themselves into small parties under leaders of their own choice, and at times attacked detachments of the British army, but most frequently those of their own countrymen, who were turning out as a royal militia. These American parties severally acted from their own impulse, and set themselves to oppose the British, without either the knowledge of each others motions, or any preconcerted general plan. Col. Williams, of the district of Ninety Six, was particularly indefatigable in collecting and animating the friends of Congress in that settlement; and with these he frequently harassed the conquerors.

A considerable number of North Carolina militia took the field, and agreed to rendezvous at Anson court-house on the 20th of July, that they might be in readiness to co-operate with the continental army. On the approach

of

of the Americans, major M'Arthur, who commanded ^{1780.} on the Peedee, called in his detachments, abandoned his post on the Cheraw hill, and marched directly to join the main body of the royal army at Camden. On the day the British relinquished this part of the country, the inhabitants, distressed by their depredations, and disgusted with their conduct, generally took arms. Lord Nairne and 106 British invalids, going down the Pee-dee, were made prisoners by a party of the Americans commanded by major Thomas, who had been lately received as loyal subjects. A large boat coming up from George-town, well stored with necessaries for major M'Arthur's party, was seized for the use of the American army. All the new made British militia officers, excepting col. Mills, were made prisoners by their own men. The retreat of the British from their out-posts to Camden, and the advance of the American army, joined to the impolitic conduct of the conquerors toward their new subjects, concurred to produce a general revolt in favor of congress.

On the 28th of July (the day after the American ^{July} army encamped at Spink's farm on the road to Cam- ^{28.} den) col. Otho H. Williams repeated to gen. Gates the advice he had given in substance to baron de Kalb more than a fortnight before; which was to deviate from the direct road to Camden—to order gen. Caswell to join him at the mouth of Rocky river on Peedee, and from thence to send his heavy baggage, women and invalids to Salisbury (a day's march higher up the country) and there establish an hospital and magazines—to march all his effective troops from the mouth of Rocky river to Charlotte, where a magazine, hospital, and if necessary

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1780. an armory might be securely established—and from Charlotte to march by way of Waxhaws toward Camden. By this route the army might have proceeded without impediment through a well cultivated country, whose inhabitants were attached to the common cause. Magazines and hospitals might have been established in the rear, secure from surprise, and directly upon the old trading road from Philadelphia to Charlestown, by which the supplies from the north might have followed the army without danger. Not only so, but the army would have been followed by numerous bands of faithful friends, able and willing both to furnish supplies and to assist with arms, instead of being encompassed with a host of fugitive tories, whose poverty afforded no subsistence, and whose perfidy prevented secrecy. A council was called upon the occasion; but the opinion did not prevail: the first motives preponderated, and the army pursued the direct route for Camden. It was joined by lieut. col. Porterfield, an officer of distinguished merit, with about 100 Virginia soldiers. He had by his singular address and good conduct, found means, not only to avoid the hapless fate of the other corps which had retreated after the surrender of Charlestown; but to subsist his men, and keep up the semblance of a possession of that part of South Carolina.

The army soon felt the scarcity of provisions; and their fatigue, fasting and repeated disappointments as to supplies, so exasperated them, that their murmurs became very audible. The aspect of mutiny was almost in every countenance; but as there was no object to be seized upon or sacrificed, the conciliating arguments of the officers, who shared the calamity without discrimination,

nation, induced the soldiers to forbear and rely upon 1780. legal expedients and a good providence for succour. The principal means of subsistence found on the march were lean cattle accidentally picked up in the woods. Meal and flour were so very scarce, that the whole army was obliged to make use of green corn and peaches, as the best substitutes for bread the country afforded. Dysenteries afflicted the troops in consequence of such diet. It was however the least of two evils. They had no other relief from famine, which added to the intense heat of the season, and unhealthiness of the climate, threatened destruction to the army. *Starvation* became a cant term upon the occasion. Perhaps the burlesque introduced by the ignorance of some and the policy of others, to show a contempt for their sufferings, contributed not a little to the resolute stoutness that now discovered itself.

In the afternoon of the 5th of August, the American general was informed from gen. Caswell, that he meant to surprise or attack a post of the enemy, on little Lynch's creek. This made Gates the more anxious for a junction, as he apprehended some injudicious adventure might deprive him of the assistance which the militia were capable of affording. The next morning intelligence arrived from the same authority, which increased his anxiety to a painful degree, it was, that the enemy just mentioned, meditated an attack upon the militia in their encampment. Such a show of enterprise, and such marks of intimidation—such a contrariety of intentions and apprehensions perplexed the commanding officer, and made the junction still more desirable. Gates therefore gave orders for the troops to clean their arms and to have every thing ready for action; and then proceeded

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1780. ed with his deputy adjutant general and aids to the encampment of the militia, whom he found to be a fine body of men, deficient only in discipline and military arrangements. Whether Caswell found his vanity gratified in a separate command, or wished to precipitate the army into an action with the enemy, was not discoverable: the fact is, he postponed a junction until he saw the perplexity and danger in which his ambition or indiscretion had involved the army. When it was too late for measures to be changed, he complied more through necessity than inclination.

Aug.
6.

At Deep-creek the troops received a supply of good beef, and half a pound of Indian corn meal per man. They eat their mess; drank of the stream contentedly; and the next day with great cheerfulness marched to the Cross-roads, where they were joined by the militia, and the whole were encamped together. A good understanding appeared to subsist among the officers of all ranks, and the common soldiers vied with each other in supporting their spirits and despising their fatigues, which they appeared to forget. The expectation of this junction had induced the commanding officer of the post on Lynch's creek to retire the day before, under the mask of offensive operations, which caused the alarm above related.

Being now in a country of Pine-barrens, extensive sand-hills and impenetrable swamps, unable to collect provisions and forage from the lower and more fertile parts of the country, which were covered by the enemy's advanced posts, the army could not remain more than a day in this situation, though a large reinforcement of militia from Virginia was expected every hour.

Gates

Gates therefore pressed forward; and finding the enemy ¹⁷⁸⁰ disposed to dispute his passage of Lynch's creek, while he kept up an appearance of taking that route, he marched the army by the right toward Clermont (better known by the name of Rugeley's mills) where the enemy had a small garrison. His intentions being discovered, both posts were abandoned with some precipitation on the 11th, the officers fearing either that their ^{11.} march to Camden would be intercepted, or that they should be attacked on their retreat. Lord Rawdon, who commanded the advanced posts of the British army, assembled all his forces at Camden, and suffered gen. Gates, without any material interruption, to conduct his army to Clermont about 13 miles from Camden, where his troops encamped on the 13th. ^{13.} The next day brigadier gen. Stevens arrived with a respectable reinforcement of 700 Virginia militia. An express also arrived the same day from col. Sumpter, who reported to Gates, that a number of the South Carolina militia had joined him on the west side of the Wateree; and that an escort of clothing, ammunition and other stores for the garrison at Camden, was on the way from Charlestown, and must pass the Wateree at a ferry about a mile from Camden, under cover of a small redoubt occupied by the enemy, on the opposite bank of the river.

A detachment of the Maryland line, consisting of 100 regular infantry and a company of artillery, with two brass field pieces, and 300 North Carolina militia, were immediately forwarded under the command of lieut. col. Woolford to join col. Sumpter, who had orders to reduce the redoubt and intercept the convoy. Gen. Gates was preparing at the same time to advance

1780. still nearer to Camden, and if necessary, to take a position on some good grounds in its vicinity: but he was not without hope that lord Rawdon would evacuate that post as he had the others; and if he should not, the prospect was, that the multitudes of militia expected from the upper counties would cut off his supplies from all quarters, and leave the garrison an easy prey to the army. After making some convenient arrangements, having the arms cleaned, and distributing some provisions, which had been collected, Gates convened his general officers, of which grade there were not less than thirteen in that little army, the militia brigades of North Carolina having far more than sufficient; and after a conference with them, he directed the deputy adjutant general, col. Williams, to issue the following orders, with the intention as well to take advantage of the time when col. Sumpter was to execute his enterprise, as to be prepared for action himself, in case it should be offered—"Camp, Clermont, 15th of August, 1780. After general orders. The sick, the extra-artillery stores, the heavy baggage, and such quarter master's stores as are not immediately wanted, to march this evening, under a guard, to Waxhaws. To this order the general requests the brigadiers general, to see that those under their command pay the most exact and scrupulous attention."

"Lieut. col. Edmonds, with the remaining guns of the park, will take post and march with the Virginia brigade under gen. Stevens: he will direct, as any deficiency happens in the artillery affixed to the other brigades, to supply it immediately: his military staff and a proportion of his officers, with forty of his men, are

to await him and attend his orders. The troops will be ready to march precisely at ten o'clock in the following order, viz. Col. Armand's advance—Cavalry commanded by col. Armand—Col. Porterfield's light infantry upon the right flank of col. Armand, in Indian file, 200 yards from the road—Major Armstrong's light infantry in the same order as col. Porterfield's, upon the left flank of the legion:—Advance guard of foot, composed of the advanced picquets—First brigade of Maryland—Second brigade of Maryland—Division of North Carolina—Virginia division:—Rear guard—Volunteer cavalry upon flanks of the baggage equally divided.—In this order the troops will proceed on their march this night. In case of an attack by the enemy's cavalry in front, the light infantry upon each flank will instantly march up, and give and continue the most galling fire upon the enemy's horse. This will enable col. Armand not only to support the shock of the enemy's charge, but finally to rout them. The colonel will therefore consider the order to stand the attack of the enemy's cavalry, be their number what they may, as positive."

"General Stevens will immediately order one captain, two lieutenants, one ensign, three sergeants, one drum and 60 rank and file, to join col. Porterfield's infantry: these are to be taken from the most experienced woodsmen, and men every way fittest for the service. Gen. Caswell will likewise complete major Armstrong's light infantry to their original number: these must be immediately marched to the advanced posts of the army."

"The troops will observe the profoundest silence upon their march, and every soldier who offers to fire without the command of his officer must be instantly put to

1780. death. When the ground will admit of it, and the near approach to the enemy renders it necessary, the army will (when ordered) march in columns. The artillery at the head of their respective brigades, and the baggage in the rear. The guard of the heavy baggage will be composed of the remaining officers and soldiers of the artillery, one captain, two subalterns, four sergeants, one drum and sixty rank and file; and no person whatever is to presume to send any other soldier upon that service. All bat-men, waiters, &c. who are soldiers taken from the line, are forthwith to join their regiments, and act with their masters while they are upon duty—The tents of the whole army to be struck at tattoo.”

When the deputy adjutant general received these orders, he showed Gates an abstract of the field returns of the different corps, which he had just been digesting into a general return. From thence it appeared, that the whole American army, officers included, amounted only to 3663 (exclusive of the troops detached to col. Sumpter) beside col. Porterfield's and major Armstrong's light infantry, amounting to 250, and col. Armand's legion to 120, altogether 370, and a few volunteer cavalry. There were about 900 continental infantry, rank and file, and 70 cavalry. This force was inferior to what the general imagined: his plan however was adopted, and he thought it too late to retreat. The army marched about ten at night, and had proceeded to within half a mile of Sander's creek, about half way to Camden, when a firing commenced in front.

Lord Cornwallis, unknown to gen. Gates, arrived the day before at Camden. His inferior force, consisting of about 1700 infantry and 300 cavalry, would have justified

justified a retreat: but considering that no probable ^{1786.} events of an action could be more injurious to the royal interest than that measure, he resolved upon taking the first good opportunity of attacking the Americans; and learning that the situation of their encampment at Clermont was disadvantageous, he marched about the same time the Americans did, with a full determination to attack them in their camp at day break. About half ^{Aug.} an hour past two in the morning, the advanced parties ^{16.} of both armies met in the woods, and a firing commenced. Some of the cavalry of Armand's legion being wounded by the first fire, threw the others into disorder, and the whole recoiled so suddenly, that the first Maryland regiment, in front of the column, was broken, and the whole line of the army thrown into a general consternation. This first impression struck deep. The light infantry however executed their orders; and particularly those under Porterfield behaved with such spirit, that the enemy was no less surprised at this unexpected meeting. A few prisoners were taken on both sides, by whose information the respective commanders derived a knowledge of circumstances, of which both, till then, were ignorant. Porterfield, in whose abilities and activity Gates had justly placed great dependance, received a musket ball, which shattered the bones of his leg, and was under the necessity of submitting to be carried into the rear. A part of the light infantry still kept their ground, and being supported by the van-guard and the legion infantry, which discovered much bravery, the American army soon recovered its order. Cornwallis also kept his ground; and frequent skirmishes ensued during the night, with scarce any other effect than to

1780. discover the situation of the armies, to evince the intentions of the generals, and to serve as a prelude to what was to occur in the morning.

Immediately after the alarm, the American army was formed in the following manner—the second Maryland brigade, under gen. Gist, on the right of the line, flanked by a morass;—the North Carolina division, under gen. Caswell, in the centre;—and the Virginia brigade, under gen. Stevens, on the left, flanked by the North Carolina militia light infantry and a morass: thus both flanks were well covered. The artillery was posted on the most advantageous ground, near the main road, which was about the centre of the line. Col. Armand's corps was ordered to the left, to support the left flank, and oppose the enemy's cavalry. Baron de Kalb commanded on the right of the line; and gen. Smallwood the first Maryland brigade, which was posted as a corps-de-reserve two or three hundred yards in the rear. Gates then called his general officers together, and desired col. Williams to communicate the information which he had collected from the captives, which being done, the general said, "Gentlemen, you know our situation, what are your opinions?" Gen. Stevens answered, "It is now too late to retreat." Silence ensuing, and no reply being made, the general, after a pause, pronounced, "Then we must fight: gentlemen, please to take your posts." No more was said in council: but it was afterward declared to be the private opinion of some then present, that it was injudicious to risk a general battle, and that a retreat was by no mean impracticable. It was not to the credit of any officer to make such declaration. Whoever is called to a council
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of war, and declines giving his own opinion if he has¹⁷⁸⁰ any, acts below the courage of a soldier, and should thenceforward screen either his cowardice or treachery, by keeping the matter a profound secret.

The British army was thus disposed—the division on the right consisted of a small corps of light infantry, the 23d and 33d regiments under lieut. col. Webster;—the division on the left was formed of the volunteers of Ireland, the infantry of the legion, and part of lieut. col. Hamilton's North Carolina regiment, under lord Rawdon, with 2 six and 2 three pounders, commanded by lieut. M'Leod;—the 71st regiment with a six pounder, composed the reserve, one battalion in the rear of the right division, the other of the left;—and the cavalry of the legion was stationed in the rear, close to the 71st regiment. This disposition was made at break of day: but before it took place the British appeared in column about 200 yards in front of the American artillery, while gen. Gates was with his corps-de-reserve. Col. Williams ordered the artillery to be fired upon them, which was instantly obeyed; and then went to inform Gates of the occasion of the firing, and of the enemy's having the appearance of spreading and forming a line by their right, "which," said the colonel, "gives us a favorable opportunity of commencing the attack of infantry with Stevens's brigade." The general answered, "Very proper, let it be done." Orders were immediately given to Stevens, who advanced with his brigade in excellent order and with great alacrity. The enemy had however, formed their line before he got near enough for action. Both lines were advancing, and had come within firing distance of each other, when Stevens, en-

1780. couraging his men, put them in mind of their bayonets, which they had received only the day before, calling out to them, "My brave fellows, you have bayonets as well as they, we'll charge them." Col. Williams had advanced in front of the brigade, from which he had taken a few volunteers, intending, by a partial fire, to extort that of the enemy at some distance, in expectation that the militia would stand the first discharge, and be brought to closer action with their loaded muskets. But the advantage was lost. Lord Cornwallis observing the movement of the Virginians under Stevens, gave orders to lieut. col. Webster to begin an attack. The British infantry upon that rushed through the thin fire of the militia with great intrepidity, and furiously charged the brigade with a cheer. The intimidated militia threw down most of their arms, bayonets and all, and with the utmost precipitation and trepidation fled from the field, and were followed by the North Carolina militia light infantry. The whole North Carolina division being panic-struck, imitated the shameful example; except one regiment, commanded by col. Dixon, next in the line of battle to the continental regulars, which fired several rounds; indeed, gen. Gregory's brigade, to which that regiment belonged, paused longer than the others; but at last all fled, and the majority, without their arms, or firing a single shot. It cannot appear excessively strange, that such raw militia could not stand before bayonets, when it is considered, that for some time they had subsisted on fruit scarcely ripe, without any regular rations of flesh, flour, or spirituous liquors;—that their strength and spirits were depressed by such preceding low regimen;—and that, after an unexpected meeting

meeting of the enemy, they had to lie for hours on their arms, attended with the apprehension of immediate danger, and the horrors of the night.

All the militia who composed the left wing and centre being routed, the second continental brigade, consisting of Maryland and Delaware troops, making the right wing, and the corps-de-reserve, were left to fight or retreat; but as they had no orders for the latter, they maintained their position with great resolution, and gave the British an unexpected check. The second brigade even gained ground, and took no less than 50 prisoners. But the corps-de-reserve being considerably out-flanked, were thrown into disorder: they were soon rallied by their officers, and renewed the action with much spirit. Overpowered by numbers they were again broken: but the brave examples and exertions of the officers induced them to form afresh. The gallantry of this corps covered, in a great measure, the left of the second brigade, which was in a manner blended with the enemy's line on their left, where the conflict was desperate. The Americans thinking themselves masters of the field, disputed with the British who should conquer and retain the other as prisoners of war. At length the enemy directing their whole force against these two devoted corps, the fire of the musketry became yet more tremendous, and was continued with equal perseverance and obstinacy, till Lord Cornwallis observing that there was no cavalry opposed to him, pushed forward his dragoons, and charging with his bayonets at the same moment, put an end to the contest. Never did men behave better than the continentals in the whole of the action; but all attempts to rally the militia were ineffectual.

1780. *fectual.* Lieut. col. Tarleton's legion charged them as they broke, and pursued them as they were fleeing. Without having it in their power to defend themselves, they fell in great numbers under the legionary sabres.

General Gates was borne off the field by a torrent of dismayed militia. They constituted so great a part of his army, that when he saw them break and flee with such precipitation, he lost every hope of victory; and his only care was, if possible, to rally a sufficient number, to cover the retreat of the regular troops: he retired with gen. Caswell to Clermont, in hope of halting them at their late encampment. But the further they fled, the more they dispersed, and the generals giving up all as lost, retired with a very few attendants to Charlotte. On their retreat, an officer from col. Sumpter overtook them, and reported to Gates, that the colonel had succeeded fully in his enterprise the evening before against the enemy's post on the Wateree; had reduced the redoubt and captured the guard; and had intercepted the escort with the stores, which were all taken, with about 40 waggons and upward of 100 prisoners. Gates however could take no advantage of this success: the enemy were at his heels, and his victorious friends on the opposite side of a river too distant to form a junction in time to prevent his fate.

Most of the Virginia militia returned to Hillsborough by the route they came to camp; and gen. Stevens found means to stop a considerable number at that place: but the term for which they had taken the field being nearly expired, all who had not deserted were soon afterward discharged. The North Carolinians fled different ways, as their hopes led or their fears drove them; and

many

many were intercepted by their disaffected countrymen, 1780. who but a few days before had generally submitted to Gates, by whom they were generously sent to their homes, upon a promise of remaining neuter or of following his colours. Several considerable parties had actually taken arms with a professed design of joining the Americans; but so soon as they heard of their defeat, they became active in the pursuit of the fugitives, and killed or captured all that came in their way.

Baron de Kalb, while exerting himself with great bravery to prevent the defeat of the day, received eleven wounds. His aid de camp, lieut. col. du Buysson, embraced him, announced his rank and nation to the surrounding foe, and begged that they would spare his life. While he generously exposed himself to save his friend, he received sundry dangerous wounds, and was taken prisoner. The baron expired in a short time, though he received the most particular assistance from the British. He spent his last breath in dictating a letter, expressive of the warmest affection for the officers and men of his division—of the greatest satisfaction in the testimony given by the British army of the bravery of his troops—of his being charmed with the firm opposition they made to superior force, when abandoned by the rest of the army—of the infinite pleasure he received from the gallant behaviour of the Delaware regiment, and the companies of artillery attached to the brigades—and of the endearing sense he entertained of the merit of the whole division he commanded. The congress resolved on the 14th of October, that a monument should be erected to his memory in Annapolis, the metropolis of Maryland, with a very honorable inscription. Gen. Rutherford

1780. Rutherford surrendered to a party of the British legion. All the other general officers escaped; but were separated from their respective commands, and obliged to flee with precipitation. Every corps was broken, and dispersed through the woods. The bogs and brush, which in a degree screened them from the fury of their foes, laid them under the necessity of separating from each other. Major Anderson of the 3d Maryland regiment, was the only infantry officer, whose efforts to rally the men, after the total rout, were in any degree effectual. A few individuals of several companies joined him at some distance from the field, and others added to that small number by falling into his ranks on the march. The removal of the heavy baggage to Waxhaws was delayed till the morning of the action, contrary to Gates's express orders the day preceding: so that the greatest part, together with all that followed the army, fell into the hands of the enemy, or was plundered in the route by those who went off early, and could take time for such baseness. A general transfer of property took place: even that which escaped the foe fell not again into the hands of the right owners, except some small part of the officers baggage, which was recovered at Charlotte. The baggage waggons indeed of gen. Gates and baron de Kalb, being furnished with stout horses and clever drivers, who understood their business and knew the roads, were fully preserved. All the baron's baggage and papers were saved: as were Gates's, and every paper and private letter of all the gentlemen belonging to his family. The pursuit was rapid for more than twenty miles; and so great was the dismay of the retreating troops (the cries of the murdered

dered in the rear, being echoed by the women and 1780. wounded men with increasing terror) that at the distance of forty miles, whole teams of horses were cut out of the waggons to accelerate the flight. Many wounded officers and soldiers were got off by like expedients: some of whom gave astonishing proofs of what pain, fatigue and want, the human constitution can bear. The road by which the troops fled, was covered with arms, baggage, the sick, the wounded, and the dead. Gates was persuaded by all that he saw and heard, that the regular troops were entirely cut off, and the whole either killed or captured; and that there was no prospect of collecting a force at Charlotte (where he arrived late in the night) adequate to the defence of the country: he therefore left gen. Caswell at Charlotte to assemble the militia of Mecklenburgh county, and proceeded with all possible dispatch to Hillsborough, to devise some plan of defence, in conjunction with the legislative body of North Carolina. He considered not, that by shortening his journey, and remaining at Charlotte or Salisbury, appearances would be less unfavorable to his personal reputation, though less beneficial to the public cause.

Lord Cornwallis's victory was complete. The Americans lost eight field pieces, the whole of their artillery, with all their ammunition waggons, beside 150 others, a considerable quantity of military stores, and the greatest part of their baggage. The numbers slain cannot be precisely ascertained, no returns of the militia ever being made after the action. Three hundred of the North Carolina militia, beside 63 wounded, were made prisoners. Only three of the Virginia militia were left wounded

1780. wounded on the field of battle: owing to their making no stand, and being first in flight, but few of them were captivated. From the abstract of muster and inspection, taken at Hillsborough October the 1st, it appears that exclusive of baron de Kalb and gen. Rutherford, the numbers of killed, captured and missing, in the actions of the 16th and 18th, were 4 lieutenant colonels, 3 majors, 14 captains, 4 captain lieutenants, 16 lieutenants, 3 ensigns, 4 staff, 78 subalterns, and 604 rank and file. The impossibility of accounting with certainty for those who fell in battle, and those who fell into the hands of the enemy, obliged the officers to make many missing, who were probably killed, or prisoners. Though Cornwallis's victory was complete, yet from the accounts which the British gave of the action, it may be inferred that it was dearly bought. Gates apprehended early in September, that he had established it as a certain fact, that more than 500 of their old troops were killed and wounded.

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On the 17th and 18th of August, brigadiers Smallwood and Gift, with several other officers, arrived at Charlotte (full 80 miles from the place of action) where upward of a hundred regular infantry, col. Armand's cavalry, and a major Davie's small partizan corps of horse from the Waxhaw settlement had collected. Smallwood had been separated from the first Maryland brigade, after the men had been engaged a while, by the interposal of the enemy; and finding it impracticable to rejoin them, as well as apprehending they must be overpowered and could not retreat, rode off for personal safety. The little provision which the troops met with at Charlotte, proved a most seasonable refreshment. The

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drooping spirits of the officers began to revive; and hopes were entertained, that a respectable force might soon be again assembled from the country militia, and from the addition of col. Sumpter's victorious detachment. All these prospects however were soon obscured by intelligence on the 19th of the complete dispersion of that corps. On hearing of gen. Gates's defeat, col. Sumpter began to retreat up the south side of the Wateree, with his prisoners and captured stores. Lord Cornwallis on the morning of the 17th, dispatched Tarleton with his legion and a detachment of infantry, to pursue him. This was done with so much celerity and address, that he was overtaken the next day at Fishing-creek. The British horse rode into the camp before he was prepared for defence. The Americans having been four days without sleep or provisions, were more obedient to the calls of nature, than attentive to her first law of self-preservation. Col. Sumpter had taken every prudent precaution to prevent a surprise, but his videttes were so fatigued that they neglected their duty. With much difficulty he got a few of his corps to make a short stand, but the greater part fled to the river or to the woods. The British prisoners, about 300, were all retaken and conducted to Camden. The colonel lost all his artillery, and the whole detachment was either killed, captured or dispersed.

Every hope from that quarter being thus banished, and the militia not expected to assemble in less than three days, the officers and soldiers at Charlotte began to think their situation again dangerously critical. No order had yet taken place among those who had fortuitously met there. The troops were half famished; and there

1780. was no store of provisions in the town, which was open on all sides, and no more defensible than a plain. There was nothing to oppose or impede the approach of the enemy, for the Wateree was fordable. In fact there were reasons sufficient to apprehend that the wretched remnant of an unfortunate army might be cut to pieces before night. The officers therefore were generally of opinion, that no time should be lost in making a retreat toward Salisbury, and the whole were prepared to march at the moment when gen. Smallwood, who quartered at a small distance from the town, came to take the command. Col. Williams, the deputy adjutant general, and one of the brigade majors, took the route toward Camden, to direct those coming that road to file off for Salisbury, as also to get further intelligence of the enemy. The necessary information was sent by express to major Anderson. The troops were followed by a number of whig families, and the whole tribe of the Catawba Indians, in number about 300, of which there were about 60 warriors. There was greater plenty of provisions in this part of the country, than in that through which the army had advanced. The troops supplied themselves under the direction of the officers, there being no magazines. In such circumstances a strict regularity could not be preserved, and the inhabitants necessarily felt the effects of the general distress.

A minute representation of the retreat from Charlotte to Salisbury, would be the image of complicated wretchedness. Care, anxiety, pain, humiliation and dejection, poverty, hurry and confusion, promiscuously marked the shocking scene. Painful objects presented themselves to view—several men without an arm—some with but

one—and many standing in need of kind and powerful assistance. 1789.

The exertions of col. Williams of Ninety Six on the side of congress have been already noticed; it must now be mentioned, that on the day Sumpter was surprised, he engaged a considerable party of British and Tories, at Musgrove's mills on the Enoree river. On the 17th, he marched, with cols. Shelby and Clark, and a party of about 200 South Carolinians and Georgians, to attack a body of 200 Tories. These were reinforced at night by 100 more and 200 regulars. The next day they advanced upon the whig party; every man of which was ordered to take his tree for defence, not to fire till the enemy was within 8 yards, and then to be sure of his object. A warm fire began: after a while the enemy was obliged to retreat, having 60 men killed mostly British, and 70 wounded: the others had 3 killed and 8 wounded.

Major Anderson, having obtained intelligence of lieut. col. Tarleton's retiring after surprising Sumpter, moved slowly in order to give the fugitive soldiers an opportunity of joining him; and continued his march toward Charlotte as the nearest place of repose and refreshment, of which his little party was in great want. From Charlotte the major sent an express to gen. Smallwood at Salisbury, to inform him of his arrival, the situation of the enemy, and the wish of the people in that neighbourhood, that he would continue with his party among them. He also acquainted the general, that it was the request of the militia, that he would return and take the command of them; Caswell having left Charlotte, before the time appointed for their meeting. The gene-

1780. ral declined the honor of the invitation, considering the feebleness of his force, that the men were worn down with fatigue and fasting, were destitute of all necessities, and therefore inadequate to the needful assistance, in case the British should advance. He sent also the particular friend of major Anderson to hasten his departure from Charlotte, and to conduct him to Salisbury, where he continued with the effective soldiers who had joined him from time to time. After the major's arrival at Salisbury, Smallwood received an order from Gates to advance toward Hillsborough, which order he had anticipated by having crossed the river before he received it. The troops were halted for a day or two at Guildford court-house, and then upon fresh orders from Gates marched on to Hillsborough, where they arrived the 6th of September. A few officers and men had arrived there before by a different route.

Lord Cornwallis, notwithstanding the completeness of his victory, was restrained for some time from pursuing his conquests, through the loss he had sustained in the battle, the extreme heat of the weather, the fickleness of the season, and the want of necessary supplies; he therefore remained at Camden. But he dispatched proper people to North Carolina the day after the action, with directions to the royalists to take arms and assemble immediately, and promised to march without loss of time to their support. Till he could advance toward that state, his attention was engaged in adopting measures to crush all future opposition to the royal govern-

* In compiling the above narrative from July the 28th, recourse has been had to a detail of facts written by the deputy adjutant general, col. Otho H. Williams.

ment, which betrayed him into a still severer policy than ^{1780.}
had hitherto been adopted.

On the 18th of August, he thus addressed lieut. col. ^{Aug.}
Cruger, the commandant of the British garrison at Nine- ^{18.}
ty Six.—“ I have given orders that all the inhabitants of
this province who had submitted, and who have taken
a part in this revolt, should be punished with the greatest
rigor, that they should be imprisoned, and their whole
property taken from them or destroyed. I have like-
wise directed, that compensation should be made out of
their effects to the persons who have been plundered
and oppressed by them. I have ordered, in the most
positive manner, that every militia man, who had bore
arms with us, and had afterward joined the enemy,
should be immediately hanged. I have now, Sir, only
to desire, that you will take the most vigorous measures
to extinguish the rebellion, in the district in which you
command, and that you will obey in the strictest man-
ner, the directions I have given in this letter, relative
to the treatment of this country *.” Similar orders were
addressed to the commanders of different posts. Exe-
cutions and severities followed, which instead of extin-
guishing what his lordship pronounced rebellion, will
only cause it to rage in the breasts of the determined
friends to congress, till it bursts forth with redoubled
fury whenever a promising opportunity offers.

Notwithstanding the triumph of the British arms in
the conquest, first of the capital and then of the state of
South Carolina, several of the inhabitants, respectable
for their numbers, but more so for their weight and in-

* It was sent to gen. Greene as a genuine copy of the order, by his
lordship in a letter of December 27, 1780.

1780. fluence, had continued firm to the cause of independence: though restrained by their paroles from doing any thing injurious to the interest of his Britannic majesty, yet by their silent example they had induced many to decline exchanging their paroles as prisoners, for the protection and privileges of British subjects. To remove every bias of this kind, and to enforce a general submission to royal government, lord Cornwallis gave orders to send out of the state a number of such principal persons, prisoners on parole in Charlestown. On Aug. the 27th of August, Christopher Gadsden esq; the lieutenant governor, most of the civil and militia officers, and some others of the hearty friends of America, were taken early in the morning out of their houses and beds by armed parties, and brought to the exchange, from whence when collected together, they were removed on board the Sandwich guardship, and from thence transported in a few days to St. Augustine. The manner in which the order was executed, was not less painful to the feelings of gentlemen, than the order itself was injurious to the rights of prisoners, entitled to the benefits of a capitulation. Guards were left at their respective houses. The private papers of some were examined. Reports were immediately circulated to their disadvantage, and every circumstance managed so as to induce a general belief, that they were all apprehended for violating their paroles, and for concerting a scheme for burning the town, and massacring the loyal subjects. On the very day of their confinement, they remonstrated to lieutenant col. Balfour, the commandant of Charlestown, asserting their innocence, and challenging their accusers to appear face to face, with their charges against them.

To

To this a message from the commandant was delivered 1780. officially, in which he acknowledged that this extraordinary step had been taken "from motives of policy." On the 1st of Sept. gen. Moultrie, as the senior continental officer, that was a prisoner under the capitulation, demanded a release from the prison-ship of those gentlemen particularly, who were entitled to the benefit of that act; and requested, that if the demand could not be complied with, he might have leave to send an officer to congress to represent the grievance. The commandant, under the pretence that the terms of the letter were very exceptionable and unwarrantable, declined returning an answer; and cleared himself of a business that he was not capable of defending, by declaring in a note from a major of brigade, that he would not receive any further application from the general on the subject. The British endeavoured to justify the sending of the citizens to St. Augustine, by alleging the right of captors to remove prisoners whithersoever they please, without regarding their convenience. It was generally conceived, that the right of the citizens of Charlestown to reside at their homes, was not only strongly implied, but plainly expressed in the capitulation; however as the article respecting the inhabitants of the town, only promised that they should be prisoners on parole, and did not immediately add in Charlestown, the British commanders took the advantage of it for removing gentlemen, charged with no breach of the capitulation, from their houses, wives and children, by offering them that parole in St. Augustine, to which they had an undoubted right in Charlestown, upon the established rule among civilized nations, to construe capitulations, where ambiguous, in

Sept.
1.

1780. favor of the vanquished. The suffering individuals might justly complain upon the occasion; but congress could not, considering what had taken place with regard to the convention troops under gen. Burgoyne.—See p. 45—51.

Sept. 16. On the 16th of September, lord Cornwallis proceeded to the sequestration of all estates belonging to the decided friends of American independence. In the execution of this business, John Cruden esq; was appointed to take possession of the estates of particular persons, designated in warrants issued by his lordship of the commandant of Charlestown. Many will pronounce this sequestration by his proclamation, as justifiable as the confiscation of real and personal property by the several American states, upon the recommendation of congress in 1777.

The numbers of real royalists, together with the occasional ones who joined the train of the conqueror, bore so large a proportion to the remaining inhabitants of South Carolina, that lord Cornwallis, with his superiority in arms, might reasonably expect, that the patrons of American independence would be utterly incapable of giving him further trouble in that state; but events were different. Col. Marion had retired from Charlestown during the siege, his leg being fractured, which disabled him from commanding his regiment. After the surrender of the capital, he retreated to North Carolina. He was promoted by gov. Rutledge to the rank of brigadier general, about the time that Sumpter was honored in like manner; which was soon after the latter had penetrated into South Carolina, and recommenced a military opposition to British government, though

though he has hitherto been spoken of under his continental title of colonel. Marion successfully prosecuted, in the north eastern extremities of the state, the same plan with Sumpter. On the advance of gen. Gates, he procured the command of sixteen men: with these he penetrated through the country, and took a position near the Santee. From this station he sallied out and captured a small British guard, and rescued 150 soldiers of the Maryland and Delaware corps, who, having been taken on the 16th of August, were on their way from Camden to Charlestown. He released the prisoners, paroled his captives, and then took himself to the woods. The defeat of Gates however obliged him to quit the state; but after an absence of a few days he returned. In his letter from Peedee of August the 29th, he wrote to Gates—"As the militia is not under any command, some days I have not more than a dozen with me." In subsequent ones he expressed himself as follows—"On September the 4th, marched with 53 to attack a body of 200 Tories, who intended to surprise me:—surprised a party of 45, killed and wounded all but 15 who escaped;—met and attacked the main body, and put them to flight, though they had 200 men." "Marched to Black Mingo September the 24th, where was a guard of 60 men of the militia:—attacked them on the 28th:—killed three, wounded and took 13 prisoners. I had 1 captain, and 11 private killed; 1 captain, 1 lieutenant, and 6 private wounded: several of the enemy have since been found dead in a swamp to which they took. So many of my men were desirous of seeing their wives and families which have been burnt out, that I found it necessary to retreat the next morning. The

1780. prisoners taken are men of fortune and family; which I hope will check the militia from taking arms against us. Capt. Murphy's party have burnt a great number of houses on little Peedee, and intend to go on in that abominable work, which I am apprehensive may be laid to me; but I assure you, that there is not one house burnt by my orders, or by any of my people; it is what I detest, to distress poor women and children." The manner of Marion's expressing himself, points out Murphy for an anti-royalist. Many of the professed whigs disgraced themselves, by the burnings, plunderings and cruelties, that they practised in their turn upon the royalists. They changed sides at times, as appears by Marion's letter of October the 18th—"I have never yet had more than seventy men to act with me, and sometimes they leave me to 20 or 30. Many who had fought with me, I am obliged to fight against." He wrote to Gates "Nov. the 4th. I crossed Peedee the 24th of Oct. the next night came up with two hundred men under Col. Tyne, whom I surprised: killed 6, wounded 14, and took prisoners 23, and got 80 horses and saddles, and as many stand of arms. The colonel made his escape; but, sending a party to the High Hills of Santoe, he fell into our hands, with several other prisoners, and some who have been very active against us and great plunderers. The militia are now turning out better than they have done. At present I have upward of 200, and expect that in three or four days it will be double." "Black river, Nov. the 9th. Col. Tarleton [with his corps] has burnt all the houses, and destroyed all the corn, from Camden down to Nelson's ferry: has behaved to the poor women with great barbarity; beat Mrs. Richard-

son, the relict of gen. Richardson, to make her tell where I was, and has not left her a change of raiment. He not only destroyed all the corn, but burnt a number of cattle in the houses he fired.—It is distressing to see the women and children sitting in the open air round a fire without a blanket, or any clothing but what they had on, and women of family, and that had ample fortunes: for he spares neither whig nor tory. Most of the inhabitants to the southward are ready and eager to take up arms against their task masters.” “Nov. the 21st. Col. Tarleton retreated to Camden after destroying most of the houses and provisions on the High Hills of Santee.—Many of my people have left me and gone over to the enemy: for they think we have no army coming on, and that they have been deceived, as we have heard nothing from you for a great while. Gen. Harrington has not done any service with the troops he commands, while I have been obliged to act with so few, as not to have it in my power to do any thing effectual, for want of men and ammunition.” So much was he distressed for ammunition, that he has engaged when he had not three rounds to each man of his party. At other times he brought his men into view, though without ammunition, that he might make a show of numbers to the enemy. The saws of mills were converted into horsemen's swords for his defence. For months he and his party slept in the open air, and sheltered themselves in the thick recesses of deep swamps; from whence he sallied out, whenever an opportunity of harassing the enemy, or of serving his country presented itself. He paid the greatest regard to private property, and restrained his men from every species of plunder.

Oppo-

1780. Opposition to royal government cannot be said to have been, at any time, altogether extinct in the extremities of South Carolina. The inhabitants of a part of the state called the New Acquisition, never were paroled as prisoners, nor did they take protection as subjects. A considerable part of Sumpter's men, after their dispersion on the 18th of August, repaired to that settlement, and generally kept in small parties for their own defence. Some of them joined major Davie at the head of about fifty volunteers, who had equipped themselves as dragoons, and was the only American corps which at that time had not been beaten or dispersed. Let us now repair to Hillsborough.

General Gates seeing the wretched relics of his unfortunate continental army destitute of every thing, did all that was possible to procure them provisions and clothing. He used the most pressing solicitations to gov. Nash and the assembly of North Carolina. They being present, saw and lamented the hapless fate of those brave men, who had been deserted in danger by the people they meant to protect. Humanity, gratitude, policy and self-defence, dictated the most vigorous exertions. Such were the exigencies of the whig party, that every man felt and submitted to the necessity of giving all his assistance, as well on the present occasion, as to provide against contingent misfortunes. The legislature therefore unanimously concurred in the measure of taking arms, ammunition and clothing, wherever to be found in the state, on the credit of the state: for paper money had scarce any value, and they had no other. They also ordered, that a class of their militia should be draughted, and march immediately toward Salisbury.

for

for which place it was thought lord Cornwallis was pre- 1780.
paring to advance with his army. A comfortable supply
of fresh meat and meal or flour, was procured for the
hospital; and beef was better and more plenty at Hills-
borough than it used to be in camp. An arrangement
of the broken troops took place upon an agreement
of a council of general and field officers, and by order
of the commanding officer. The first, third, fifth and
seventh Maryland regiments, formed together one bat-
talion, called the first, and was commanded by major
Anderson. The second, fourth and sixth Maryland
regiments, with the Delaware, constituted the second
battalion, and was commanded by major Hardman.
These two battalions were completely officered and
formed one regiment, commanded by col. Otho Holland
Williams, and lieut. col. Howard. The troops being
without pay, clothing, and sometimes provision, many
temptations were used to seduce them from their duty,
and to desert to the British army, which was well clothed
and fed, and duly supplied with rum, a thing of no small
consideration with common men: yet such was their
fidelity, that very few left the field, even to return to
their families; and they several times seized and brought
before their officers, those who would have conducted
them to Camden, and have rewarded them for their
treachery. They were, after a time, encamped about a
mile out of town, though without tents, by the help of
fence rails, poles, brush and Indian corn-tops. The
officers suffered no circumstance of humiliation or
distress, to induce them into a remission of discipline,
and being alway with their respective commands and
sharing their fate, a mutual confidence and affection
and

1780. and at the same time a due subordination prevailed throughout the line. Col. Buford having recruited his regiment, (which had been so cruelly handled by Earleton's legion) to about 200 men, arrived from Virginia on the 16th of September: but they were badly armed, and almost destitute of clothing. Near the same time, sixty Virginia militia arrived; as did about fifty of Porterfield's light infantry on the 18th: these joined Buford's corps. The regiments commanded by him and Williams were formed into one brigade by general orders, and the command given to gen. Smallwood.

Sept.
18.

Early in September col. Clark collected a number of Americans, and marched through the upper parts of South Carolina on his way to Georgia. A few joined him in Ninety Six, but the more prudent discouraged him from his ill-timed enterprise. He however prosecuted his design; and by the 14th arrived at Augusta with about 500 men. He soon engaged lieut. col. Brown the commandant; who with his small garrison and a few Indians, defended himself bravely, till he got possession of the Garden hill: then the action became warm for about a quarter of an hour, when the Americans gave way, on which he took post at the houses. At one the next day about 50 Cherokee Indians showed themselves on the opposite hill, and got into the garrison; and as soon as they were furnished with arms and ammunition, the Americans were discovered advancing. A warm engagement followed soon after, and continued till night. Clark afterward summoned Brown to surrender, and received for answer, "I shall do my duty as an officer by defending myself to the last extremity." Brown was then threatened in a second letter, and replied

plied to Clark, "If you have nothing further to offer, 1780- upon the return of the flag hostilities will commence afresh." Brown expected to be relieved, which took place on Monday morning the 18th, by the arrival of lieut. col. Cruger from Ninety Six, with a party of regular troops and militia, on the opposite hill. By the time Cruger had crossed the first of his people over the river, part of the garrison sallied out upon the Americans, and brought in two pieces of artillery and some prisoners, one of whom (Henry Dukes) was instantly hanged. Brown was wounded in both thighs at the beginning of the action. The loss was considerable on the side of the royalists; though more so on that of the Americans. When the last had left Augusta, the inhabitants who had joined Clark, or were supposed to favor his design, were treated with the utmost severity (Brown hanged about thirty) which has greatly disgusted, and prepared the minds of the people for a determined revolt.

In consequence of measures taken by the governor and assembly of North Carolina, a small quantity of clothing was obtained; and in a few days four companies of light infantry were equipped and selected from the line. The remains of the first and third regiments of cavalry came to camp the 2d of October, commanded by lieut. cols. ^{Oa.} Washington and White. ^{2.} On the same day col. Morgan, who had been but a few days arrived, was invested with the command of the light troops, consisting of the cavalry under Washington, four companies of regular infantry under Howard, and a small body of riflemen from Virginia. Morgan had orders to march immediately toward Salisbury, and act in concert with the militia

1780. militia of North Carolina, whom the legislature had subjected to the command of gen. Smallwood.

While lord Cornwallis was restrained from active operations, by the excessive heats and unhealthy season which followed his victory at Camden, major Ferguson, of the 71st British regiment, undertook personally to visit the settlements of the disaffected to the American cause, and to train their young men for service in the field. With these, at a proper season, he was to join his lordship, who advanced with his army from Camden to Waxhaws about the 8th of September. Ferguson, having collected a considerable body of troops, principally from new raised corps, was detached by way of Burke's court-house to manœuvre through the northern parts of South Carolina, and to join Cornwallis at Charlotte, of which place his lordship took possession on the 26th of September; but not without being opposed on his route by the North and South Carolina militia. Major Davie also, with his volunteer corps of horse, which served the militia as a vanguard, contributed considerably to annoy him and insult his power. Ferguson extended his route into Tryon county in North Carolina, and by proclamation and threats induced many to join him. He had under him a considerable proportion of those licentious people, who, having collected from all parts of America into these remote countries, were willing to take the opportunity of the prevailing confusion to carry on their usual depredations. As they marched, they plundered the whig inhabitants. Violences of this kind frequently repeated, induced many persons to consult their own safety by flying beyond the mountains. By such lively representations of
their

their sufferings, as the distressed are always ready to give, they added to that alarm and terror, which the total rout of Gates's army had spread through the most distant parts of North Carolina. The people conceived that their security depended upon their taking arms, and keeping the war as far from home as possible. Ferguson was tempted to stay near to the western mountains longer than necessary, under the hope of cutting off Clark in his retreat from Georgia. This delay gave an opportunity for the junction of several corps of militia, which proved his ruin. Col. Williams of Ninety Six pursued him with 450 horse. The inhabitants about the western waters (north of North Carolina and west of the Alleghany and Virginia) voluntarily mustered under their respective colonels in the different quarters where they lived. Being all mounted, and unencumbered with baggage, their motions were rapid. Each man set out with his blanket, knapsack and gun, in quest of major Ferguson, in the same manner he was used to pursue the wild beasts of the forest. At night the earth afforded them a bed, and the heavens a covering: the running stream quenched their thirst, while a few cattle driven in their rear, together with the supplies acquired by their guns, secured them provision. They were under the command of colonels Campbell, Cleveland, Shelby and Sevier. The first junction of these mountaineers was accidental. Williams was informed, on the 2d of October, by one express from Shelby, that 1500 were upon their march, and by another from Cleveland, that he was within ten miles with 800 men. When they had all joined near Gilbert-town, they amounted to near 3000. They soon found out Ferguson's encampment.

This

1780. This was on an eminence of a circular base, known by the name of King's Mountain, situated near the confines of North and South Carolina. It being apprehended, that Ferguson was hastening his march down the country to join Cornwallis, the Americans selected nine hundred and ten of their best men, and mounted them on their fleetest horses. With this force they came up with Ferguson on the 7th of October. Some dispute had arisen about the right of command; but it was finally agreed to be given to Campbell. The enterprise however was conducted without regular military subordination, under the direction of Campbell, Cleveland, Shelby, Sevier and Williams, each of whom respectively led on his own men. As they approached the royal encampment, it was agreed to divide their force. Some ascended the mountain, while others went round its base in opposite directions. Cleveland, in his progress round with one of the detachments, discovered an advanced picquet of the royal troops. On this occasion he addressed his men in the following language—

“ My brave fellows, we have beat the tories, and we can beat them. They are all cowards. If they had the spirit of men, they would join with their fellow citizens, in supporting the independence of their country. When engaged, you are not to wait for the word of command from me. I will show you by my example how to fight. I can undertake no more. Every man must consider himself as an officer, and act from his own judgment. Fire as quick as you can, and stand your ground as long as you can. When you can do no better, get behind trees or retreat; but I beg of you not to run quite off. If we are repulsed, let us make a point

a point to return and renew the fight. Perhaps you may ^{1780.} have better luck in the second attempt than the first. If any of you are afraid, such have leave to retire, and they are requested immediately to take themselves off." The firing commenced about four o'clock in the evening. The picquet gave way, and were pursued as they retired up the mountain to the main body. Ferguson, with the greatest bravery, ordered his men to charge. The Americans retired from the approaching bayonet. Soon after these had retreated, Shelby with the other detachment, having completed the designed circuit, opportunely arrived, and from an unexpected quarter poured in a well directed fire. Ferguson desisted from the pursuit, and engaged his new adversaries. The British bayonet was again successful, and caused them also to fall back. By this time the party commanded by Campbell had ascended the mountain, and renewed the attack from that eminence. Ferguson presented a new front, and was again successful; but all his exertions were unavailing. At this moment Cleveland's men, having been rallied, renewed their fire. As often as one of the American parties was driven back, another returned to its station. Ferguson's unconquerable spirit refused to surrender. However, after having repulsed a succession of adversaries, pouring in their fire from new directions, this officer received a mortal wound. No chance of escape being left, and all prospect of successful resistance being at an end, the second in command sued for quarters. The bloody conflict continued forty-seven minutes. The brave major, with 150 of his men, fell in the action; 810 including regulars, were made prisoners, 150 of whom were wounded; the remainder

1780. about 440 escaped. The whole number of British regulars was short of a hundred. The Americans took 1500 stand of arms. Their loss of men killed in the field was only about twenty; but they had a great many wounded. That distinguished militia officer, who has been repeatedly mentioned, col. Williams, was mortally wounded.

Major Ferguson was overseen in making his stand on the mountain, which being much covered with woods, gave the militia who were all riflemen, the opportunity of approaching near with greater safety to themselves, than if they had been upon plain open ground. The major however might have made good his retreat, if not with the whole, at least with a great part of his men, had he pursued his march immediately upon his charging and driving the first detachment: for though the militia acted with spirit for undisciplined troops, it was with difficulty that they could be prevailed upon to renew their attack, after being charged with the bayonet. They kept aloof, and continued popping: then gathered round, and crept nearer, till at length they levelled the major with one of their shot.

Ten of the men who had surrendered were hanged by the conquerors. Col. Cleveland had early given out, that if he caught certain persons, who had forfeited their lives by the laws of the land, he would execute them. Among those whom he doomed to execution was a militia officer, who had taken a British commission, though he had before been in the service of the state. The British officers finding what was to be the fate of the party, would have remonstrated. The colonel cut them short with—"Gentlemen, you are British officers and shall

shall be treated accordingly : therefore give your paroles, 1780.
and march off immediately : the other person is a subject of the state." The spirited mountaineers having demolished their enemy returned home.

Lord Cornwallis was so confident of the success of his schemes, that he did not wait the arrival of major Ferguson at Charlotte ; but advanced toward Salisbury, and obliged the militia for security to cross the Yadkin and take post on its north bank : he was deliberate however in his march. He halted short of Salisbury ; and upon hearing of major Ferguson's fate, faced about and returned to Charlotte. About the 14th, he retreated to Oct. Wynsborough. This was the more needful, as major 14
Davie's corps being greatly increased, frequently intercepted his lordship's foraging parties and convoys. Rifle-men also often penetrated near his camp, and from behind trees took care to make sure of their object. Thus the late conquerors found their situation very uneasy, being exposed to unseen danger if they attempted to make an excursion of only a few hundred yards from their encampment. As his lordship retired, the militia took several waggons, loaded with stores and the knapsacks of the light infantry and legion ; and single men repeatedly rode up within gun shot of his army, discharged their pieces, and made their escape.

On the 10th of November, lord Cornwallis wrote to gen. Smallwood—" I must now observe, that the cruelty exercised on the prisoners taken under major Ferguson is shocking to humanity ; and the hanging poor old col. Mills, who was always a fair and open enemy to your cause, was an act of the most savage barbarity. It has also been reported to me, that capt. Oates of

1780. col. Gray's militia, who was taken near the Peedee, was lately put to death without any crime being laid to his charge. From the character which I have heard of you, Sir, I cannot suppose that you can approve of these most cruel murders: but I hope you will see the necessity of interposing your authority to stop this bloody scene, which must oblige me in justice to the suffering loyalists, to retaliate on the unfortunate persons now in my power. —I am not conscious, that any persons have hitherto been executed by us, unless for bearing arms, after having given a military parole to remain quietly at home; or for enrolling themselves voluntarily in our militia, receiving arms and ammunition from the king's store, and taking the first opportunity of joining our enemies. The only persons who were hanged at Camden, after the actions of the 16th and 18th, except some deserters from our army, were two or three of the latter description, who were picked out from about thirty, convicted of the like offence, on account of some particular aggravating circumstances which attended their case." Notwithstanding it was manifest, that there was a powerful party in the state, which was determined to oppose the establishing of royal government; yet to convince the inhabitants, that the British were seriously resolved to remove from the country all who refused to become subjects, a further number of twenty-two citizens, who still remained prisoners on parole, was shipped off about the 16th of November for St. Augustine, to whom were added gen. Rutherford and col. Isaacs of North Carolina, who were taken near Camden in August. These were treated with more politeness than the first set. The only charge exhibited against them, as the reason of

their exile was, that "they discovered no disposition to¹⁷⁸⁰ return to their allegiance, and would, if in their power, overturn the British government."

General Gates wrote to the president of congress—Oa.
 "The enemy have, so far, the worst of the campaign,¹⁶ having lost considerably more men, officers and arms, than your army; and even lost ground, as they had several posts at the beginning of the campaign on Pee-dee, all which are now evacuated," Gen. Smallwood having left Hillsborough to take the command at Salisbury, the command of the brigade at the first place devolved on col. Williams; officers and soldiers were impatient for taking the field: every exertion was used; and the clothing being wrought up, old suits mended, and the blankets proportionably distributed, report thereof was made to head quarters; when the general gave orders for the brigade to march on the 2d of Novem-
 Nov.
 ber, with all the artillery, ammunition and baggage under the command of col. Otho H. Williams.²⁻ On the 8th the troops reached Salisbury, having marched 100 miles in less than eight days, upon three pounds and a half of Indian meal per man and some beef. Having no tents, they were fortunate in a succession of fine days, till the fourth after their arrival. Gates had now done every thing in his power to repair the injuries of his defeat; and was endeavouring to recover as much territory to the United States, as the circumstances of the war in the southern department would admit of, when he received advice from some of his friends, but from no one officially, that congress had appointed an officer to supersede him, and had ordered a court of inquiry to be held on his conduct. He had even a very polite
 H h 3 friend-

1780. friendly letter from the president of later date than those which brought the information. This treatment by congress was neither liberal, nor candid. And yet severe as it seemed to be, both in the manner and matter, it was not the most painful stroke that the unfortunate general had to suffer at that period. His friends had cautiously kept from him for some time the knowledge of the death of his son—an only child, an amiable youth of about nineteen, whose natural genius, improved by education, promised service to his country and honor to his family. Amid the general's other trials, this came suddenly upon him. He bore all with a firmness that would reflect credit on the most philosophic mind; and notwithstanding the indelicacy with which he thought himself treated, he continued to do all he could to promote the interest of the cause in which he was engaged. He remained at Hillsborough a day or two, to give an account of the measures he had taken and was about to take, to retrieve the lost country; then went on to the camp at Salisbury, where he arrived on the 11th with about 130 dragoons; and had the pleasure of hearing within four days of gen. Sumpter's success.

Nov.
11.

Sumpter, after the dispersion of his force on the 18th of August, collected a corps of volunteers, and received such occasional reinforcements, as enabled him to keep the field, though there was no continental army in South Carolina for three months. He varied his position from time to time, and had frequent skirmishes with his adversaries. Having mounted his followers, he infested the British, beat up their quarters, intercepted their convoys, and so harassed them with successive alarms, that their movements could not be made but with caution

tion and difficulty. On the 12th he was attacked at ¹⁷⁸¹ Broad river by major Weyms, commanding a corps of ^{12.} infantry and dragoons. In this action the British were defeated, and the major taken prisoner, having had his thigh broken. Though he had deliberately hung Mr. Cusack in Cheraw district, and had in his pocket a memorandum of several houses burned by his command, yet he received every indulgence from his conquerors. Gen. Sumpter was afterward attacked on the 20th by ^{20.} lieut. col. Tarleton. Sumpter being apprized of Tarleton's approach, possessed himself of a strong post on Black Stocks hill, close to Tyger river. Tarleton without waiting for the rest of his detachment, directed a precipitate attack with 170 dragoons and 80 men of the 63d regiment, to that part of the hill which was nearly perpendicular, with a small rivulet, brush wood, and a railed fence in front. A considerable division of Sumpter's force had been thrown into a large log barn, from which the men fired with security, as the apertures between the logs served them for loop holes. British valor was conspicuous upon this occasion; but no valor could surmount the obstacles and disadvantages that here stood in its way. The 63d was roughly handled; the commanding officer, two others, with one third of their privates fell. Tarleton observing their situation, charged with his cavalry: unable to dislodge the enemy either from the log barn or the height on his left, he was obliged to fall back. Lieut. Skinner, attached to the cavalry, covered the retreat of the 63d. In this manner did the whole party continue to retire (till they formed a junction with their infantry, who were advancing to sustain them) leaving Sumpter in quiet possession

1780. of the field. The general occupied the hill for several hours; but having received a bad wound, and knowing that the British would be reinforced the next morning, he thought it hazardous to wait. He accordingly retired, and taking his wounded men with him, crossed the Tyger. His loss was very small. The wounded of the British detachment were left to his mercy. The strictest humanity was exercised toward them, and they were supplied with every comfort in his power*.

General Gates moved his head quarters to Charlotte; gen. Smallwood with the militia, encamped below at Providence on the way to Camden; and the light troops under Morgan (raised by congress the 13th of October to the rank of a brigadier general, upon the repeated recommendation of Gates) were further advanced on that route. Gates ordered huts to be built in regular encampment, apprehending that the winter would be too severe a season for military operations in that latitude. Such was the situation of the southern army Dec. when gen. Greene arrived at Charlotte the 2d of December; and delivered to Gates the *first official* information of his removal from the command—in so unceremonious a manner was he treated! The army was surrendered into Greene's hands agreeable to the orders of congress, in the following terms the next day—
 "Head Quarters, Charlotte, 3d Dec. 1780. Parole Springfield—Counter-sign Greene. The honorable major general Greene, who arrived yesterday afternoon in Charlotte, being appointed by his excellency general Washington, with the approbation of the honorable

* See lieutenant Mackenzie's *Strictures on Lieut. col. Tarleton's History*, p. 71—77.

congress, to the command of the southern army, all 1780. orders will for the future issue from him, and all reports are to be made to him."

"General Gates returns his sincere and grateful thanks to the southern army for their perseverance, fortitude, and patient endurance of all the hardships and sufferings they have undergone while under his command. He anxiously hopes their misfortunes will cease therewith; and that victory and the glorious advantages attending it, may be the future portion of the southern army."

Gen. Greene, on the 4th of December, dignified his general orders with this graceful expression—"General Greene returns his thanks to the honorable major general Gates for the polite manner in which he has introduced him to his command in the orders of yesterday, and for his good wishes for the success of the southern army." The manly resignation of Gates on the one part, and the delicate disinterestedness of Greene on the other, prevented the embarrassments naturally to be apprehended on such an occasion. The latter approved and perpetuated the standing orders of the former, and treated him with that candid respect which testified his remembrance of the past services of that officer.

A few hours after Greene took the command of the army, a report was made to Gates of a foraging by the light troops under Morgan toward Camden. After collecting what the enemy had spared for further occasions in the vicinity of Clermont, that post was reconnoitred by the cavalry only. Lieut. col. Washington saw that it was fortified by a blockhouse impenetrable to small arms, and encompassed by an abbatis. Its vicinity to Camden, from whence it might be speedily suc-
coured,

1780. covered, rendered a siege ineligible. Recourse was had to stratagem. He advanced his cavalry in such a direction as to show his front without discovering his rear; and dismounting some of his men, planted the trunk of a pine tree upon some of its branches so pointedly like a field piece, that it actually intimidated the garrison. A corporal of dragoons was ordered to ride up, and summon the commanding officer, lieut. col. Rugeley, to surrender. The lucky moment was seized on, and the order obeyed with confidence. The garrison of upward of one hundred officers and soldiers, surrendered at discretion without a shot, and the works were demolished. This favorable incident, in the juncture of affairs then existing, through the little superstition to which every man is subject, was viewed by the army as an omen of success under the new commander.

It was on the 5th of October, that congress resolved that the commander in chief order a court of inquiry to be held on the conduct of gen. Gates—though unaccused of any military crime. This resolve was grounded on a former resolve, that whoever lost a post should be subject to a court of inquiry. Had that resolve been, that every commanding officer who does not beat the enemy, shall be recalled and subjected to a court of inquiry, whether or no any crime be laid to his charge, Gates might have submitted to his fate with as much patience, as officers who surrender a fort or lose a ship. But he had reason to complain, that congress, by their special resolve of the 5th, doomed him to temporary disesteem and loss of confidence. Gen. Washington was ordered to appoint another officer to the command of the southern army. On the 6th he received

ceived a line from a South Carolina delegate, acquaint-¹⁷⁸⁰ing him, that he was authorized by the delegates, of the three southern states to communicate to his excellency their wish, that gen. Greene might be the person. He was fixed upon; not from the influence of their wish, but from the opinion the commander in chief entertained of him, as being the most suited to the service; when reported to congress he was approved of by them on the 30th. Greene, before he set out, expressed his disapprobation of their passing censure upon Gates by removing him, as what tended to take away an officer's character; which injury could not be repaired, even by an acquittal after examination. He added in the conversation with a brother general—"I should be very well-satisfied to serve under Gates." He duly weighed all the circumstances attending Gates's situation, and formed an opinion very different from that which occasioned his recall; and as he travelled on to Hillsborough, generously represented the same and the reasons for it, to those persons he fell into company with, who were blindly led away, by having only considered events. Greene found the country through which he passed, so fully disaffected to the American interests and in favor of the British, that he was not without apprehension for his personal safety, ere he could join the army. Here we take our leave of him for the present, and proceed to mention some of the proceedings and acts of congress.

You have met with various charges against Dr. Shippen—p. 70. When congress had the last year expressed their satisfaction with Dr. Morgan's conduct, the last charged the former with mal-practices and misconduct in

1780. in office. The charges were transmitted to the commander in chief; and a court martial ensued. When the proceedings of the latter were before congress in August, a motion was made to insert after W. Shippen, these words—"Excepting that part of the second charge relating to his speculating in hospital stores, on which the court judge him highly reprehensible"—it was rejected; and it was resolved—"That the court martial having acquitted the said Dr. Shippen, ordered that he be discharged from arrest." The day after that extraordinary resolve respecting gen. Gates, they re-elected the doctor director general of the hospital. On the 6th of September they recommended to the several states claiming the western country, to pass such laws, and give their delegates such powers as might effectually remove the only obstacle to a final ratification of the articles of confederation; and then resolved, "that the legislature of Maryland be earnestly requested to authorize their delegates in congress to subscribe the articles." In the beginning of October they resolved, "that the unappropriated lands that may be ceded to the United States, be disposed of for the common benefit of the United States, to be settled and formed into distinct republican states." About the same time they published, that the 11th and 12th articles of the treaty of amity and commerce with France were expunged and suppressed the 1st of September, 1778, agreeable to their desire. The articles annulled were as follows—article the 11th. It is agreed and concluded, that there shall never be any duty imposed on the exportation of the molasses that may be taken by the subjects of any of the United States, from the islands of America,
which

which belong, or may hereafter appertain to his most christian majesty:—article the 12th. In compensation of the exemption stipulated by the preceding article, it is agreed and concluded, that there shall never be any duties imposed on the exportation of any kind of merchandise, which the subjects of his most christian majesty may take from the countries and possessions, present or future, of any of the Thirteen United States, for the use of the islands which shall furnish molasses. On the 6th of October the president wrote a circular letter to the several states, in which, among other matters—“It is recommended to the states, in the most pressing manner, to have their regiments completed, and in the field, by the first day of January next at furthest.” On the 16th congress resolved “that the thanks of congress be given to brigadiers Smallwood and Gist, and to the officers of the Maryland and Delaware lines, the different corps of artillery, col. Porterfield’s and major Armstrong’s corps of light infantry, and col. Armand’s cavalry, for their bravery and good conduct displayed in the action of the 16th of August.” These thanks were not applicable to all with equal propriety. The implied censure cast upon Gates in the formation of the resolve and its total silence concerning him, was a stigma that he ought not to have received, until he had been adjudged to have deserved it, putting all former services out of the question. It has been observed, that after the disaster near Camden, whenever congress published the successes and various operations of the troops, which he commanded, they scarcely even mentioned his name; whether such omissions were accidental or intended, his character was much injured by them. On the 21st,
congress

1780. congress agreed, that the officers who continued in the service to the end of the war, should be entitled to half pay during life. At the end of the month baron Steuben was ordered to repair to the southern department; and major Lee's corps to proceed immediately to join the southern army. A few days after they promoted the major to the rank of lieutenant colonel. We now turn to view the scenes northward of Philadelphia.

Aug. 20. General Washington's difficulties continued. He wrote from Orange-town on the 20th of August, to Joseph Reed, esq; whose name has so often occurred in different departments, and who is now president or governor of Pennsylvania—"With every exertion, I can scarcely keep the army in this camp, entirely continental, fed from day to day. 'Tis mortifying, that we should not at this advanced period of the campaign, have magazines of provision for even one half of the men necessary for our intended operations. I have every assurance from the French land and sea commanders, that the second division may, without some very unexpected accident, be daily expected. Should we, upon the arrival of this reinforcement, be found (after all our promises of a co-operating force) deficient in men, provision, and every other essential, your excellency can easily perceive what will be the opinion of our allies, and of all the world, and what will be the consequences in the deranged distracted state of our affairs." In another of the same date were these sentiments—"To me it will appear miraculous if our affairs can maintain themselves much longer in their present train. If either the temper or the resources of the country will not admit of an alteration, we may expect soon to be reduced to the

humiliating condition of seeing the cause of America upheld in America by foreign arms. It may easily be shown, that all the misfortunes we have met with in the military line are to be attributed to short enlistments. A great part of the embarrassments in the civil flow from the same source. The derangement of our finances is essentially to be ascribed to it. The expences of the war, and the paper emissions, have been greatly multiplied by it. We have had a great part of the time two sets of men to feed and pay, the discharged men going home, and the levies coming in. The difficulties and cost of engaging men have increased at every successive attempt, till among the present levies, we find there are some who have received a hundred and fifty dollars in specie [33l. 15s. sterling] for five months service, while our officers are reduced to the disgraceful necessity of performing the duties of drill sergeants to them. The frequent calls upon the militia have also interrupted the cultivation of their lands; and of course have lessened the quantity of the produce, occasioned a scarcity, and enhanced the prices. In an army so unstable as ours, order and oeconomy have been impracticable.— The discontents of the troops have been gradually matured to a dangerous extremity. Something satisfactory must be done, or the army must cease to exist at the end of the campaign: or it will exhibit an example of more virtue, fortitude, self denial and perseverance, than has perhaps ever been paralleled in the history of human enthusiasm."

General Washington, in compliance with a prior appointment, set out with his suite, gen. Knox and the marquis de la Fayette, to meet count de Rochambeau and

1780 and admiral Ternay at Hartford. The general with the rest of the company mustered up and borrowed all the money they could, in order to pay their expences. They could procure no more than eight thousand paper dollars. Such was the scarcity even of that depreciated commodity at camp. Before they quitted the New York state, they had expended more than half their stock; and were not a little pained with the idea of their being soon incapable of discharging the landlord's demand. They put on a good countenance when in Connecticut; called for what they wanted, and were well supplied: but the thought of reckoning with their host damped their pleasure. However to their great joy, when the bills were called for, they were informed, that the governor of Connecticut had given orders that they should pay nothing in that state, but should be at free cost. They met the French general and admiral on Sept. 21. Thursday the 21st of September at the place appointed. Gen. Washington in his conference with the count, stated the army, in the quarter he commanded, for the next campaign, at fifteen thousand operative continental troops. On the idea of 15,000, a memorial with a plan of the next campaign has been transmitted to the court of France. On Friday morning count de Rochambeau and adm. Ternay set off on their return to Newport, and on Saturday morning the American gentlemen commenced their return to the camp. During their absence a discovery of the utmost importance had been made, viz. a scheme for delivering West Point into the hands of Sir Henry Clinton. Gen. Arnold, who had the command of that post, was brave but mercenary, fond of parade and extremely desirous of acquiring

quiring money to defray the expences of it. When he entered Philadelphia after the evacuation, he made governor Penn's, the best house in it, his head quarters. This he furnished in a very costly manner, and lived in a stile far beyond his income. He continued his extravagant course of living; was unsuccessful in trade and privateering; his funds were exhausted, and his creditors importunate, while his lust for high life was not in the least assuaged. About July, 1779, he exhibited heavy accounts and demands against the public: the commissioners, upon examination, rejected about one half of the amount. He appealed to congress, and a committee was appointed, who were of opinion, that the commissioners had allowed more than the general had a right to expect or demand. This provoked him to outrageous expressions and proceedings. Disgusted at the treatment he had met with, embarrassed in his circumstances, and having a growing expensive family, he turned his thoughts toward bettering his fortune by new means. Major Andre, adjutant general to the British army, a rising young officer of great hope and merit, had commenced a correspondence with Mrs. Arnold in 1779, under the plea of supplying her with military; whether it was continued and covertly improved by the general, without her being in the least privy to it, till ripened into the scheme of giving up West Point, is not yet ascertained. But the design is generally thought to have been sometime in agitation.

For the speedy completion of the negotiation that was carrying on between Sir Henry and gen. Arnold, the Vulture sloop of war was stationed in the North River, at such a distance from the American posts, as

1780. without exciting suspicion, would serve for the necessary communication. Before this, a written correspondence, through other channels, had been maintained between Arnold and Andre at New York, under the names of Gustavus and Anderson. The necessary arrangements being made, a boat was sent at night from the shore to the Vulture to fetch major Andre, which brought him to the beach without the posts of either army, where he met Arnold. Day light approaching, he was told that he must be concealed until the next night. In order to it, he was conducted within one of the American posts, against his previous stipulation, intention and knowledge. He continued with Arnold during the following day. The next night the boatmen refusing to conduct him back to the Vulture, which had shifted her position, as she lay exposed to the fire of a cannon sent to annoy her, he was obliged to concert his escape by land. He quitted his uniform, which he had hitherto worn under a surtout, for a common coat; and was furnished with a horse, and under the name of John Anderson with a passport from Arnold, to go to the lines at White Plains, or lower if he thought proper, he being on public business. He pursued his journey alone to New York, passed all the guards and posts on the road without suspicion, and was much elated as he travelled on the next day, with the thought of his having succeeded. But unhappily for him, though providentially for the Americans, three of the New York militia, *John Paulding*, *David Williams*, and *Isaac Van Vert*, were with others out on scouting between the out-posts of the two armies. One of them sprang from his covert, and seized Andre's horse by the bridle. The major,

for, instead of instantly producing his pass, asked the man where he belonged to, who answered, *to below*. Andre suspecting no deceit said, *so do I*; then declared himself a British officer, and pressed that he might not be detained, for that he was upon urgent business. Upon the other two coming up and joining their comrade, he discovered his mistake. The confusion that followed was apparent, and they proceeded to search him till they found his papers. He offered the captors a considerable purse of gold, and a very valuable watch, to let him pass: but they nobly disdained the temptation, beside the fascinating offers of permanent provision, and even of future promotion, on condition of their conveying and accompanying him to New York. They conducted him to lieut. col. Jameson, the continental officer, who had the command of the scouting parties, amounting to 800 men, chiefly militia. Arnold's conduct with regard to this body of men, and in other respects, had excited such suspicions in the breasts of the lieut. colonel and the rest of the officers, that they had determined upon seizing the general at all adventures, had he came down and ordered them nearer the enemy. Jameson, notwithstanding his strong jealousy of Arnold, was in the issue the occasion of his escape.

When Andre appeared before him, it was under the name of Anderson; which he supported, choosing to hazard the greatest danger, rather than let any discovery be made which could involve Arnold, before he had time to provide for his safety. With a view to the general's escaping, he requested that a line might be sent to acquaint him with Anderson's detention, which Jameson

1780. son through an ill-judged delicacy granted. The papers, which were found in the major's boot, were in Arnold's hand writing, and contained exact returns of the state of the forces, ordnance and defences at West Point and its dependencies, with the artillery orders, critical remarks on the works, an estimate of the number of men that were ordinarily on duty to man them, and the copy of a state of matters that had been laid before a council of war by the commander in chief, on the sixth of the month. These papers were enclosed in a packet to gen. Washington, accompanied with a letter from the prisoner, avowing himself to be major John Andre, adjutant general to the British army, relating the manner of his capture, and endeavouring to show that he did not come under the description of a spy; and were forwarded by Jameson. Washington was upon his return from Hartford, and the messenger missed him by taking a different road from that on which the general was. Through this accident and the man's being obliged to make a circuit, the letter to Arnold, informing him of Anderson's capture, reached him some hours before Washington arrived at his quarters. No sooner had he received it, than he hastened on board the Vulture, which lay some miles below Stoney and Verplank's points. The commander in chief crossed over to West Point, and expected to meet him there: when he returned, the cause of Arnold's absence was soon discovered upon opening the packet from Jameson, which had arrived in the mean while. His excellency immediately ordered two brigades from the main army to these posts, and took ample measures for their security. Andre had been full forty-eight hours in custody, before
Arnold's

Sept.
25.

Arnold's design was known in camp. Had it succeeded, ^{1780.} the consequences must have been ruinous in the highest degree. The plan for delivering up the posts seems to have been that of engaging in a sham defence at the defiles, while a large body of the enemy took a circuit and possessed themselves of the fort. Arnold on the 8th of August had written to gen. Washington, expressing his wish that a map of the country from Robinson's house to New York, particularly on the east side of the river, might be sent him. He added—"The Massachusetts troops [militia 1234] are good and well armed. Would it not be better to continue a part or the whole of the New York brigade at this post [West Point] whose officers can be depended upon, and the troops have in general bad arms and few bayonets. The Massachusetts or Hampshire troops will be better in the field from this circumstance in their arms." In conversation with one of the officers under him, he asked which he thought would be the best mode of defence in case of an attack, whether to defend the works, or to go and fight the enemy in the defiles as they advanced. The officer said, to defend the works: Arnold declared for the other. These things were recollected, and supposed to have had a particular meaning, when his main project was discovered. Had the execution of that been completed, the forces under his command must probably have either laid down their arms or have been cut to pieces. Their loss and the immediate possession of West Point, and all its neighbouring dependencies, must have exposed the remainder of Washington's army so to the joint exertion of the British forces, by land and water, that nothing but final ruin could have been the re-

1780. sult with respect to the Americans. Such a stroke could scarcely have been recovered. Independent of the loss of artillery and stores, such a destruction of their disciplined force, and many of their best officers, must have been fatal. The British might also have turned their whole force against the French fleet and troops at Rhode Island: for they had received a considerable naval reinforcement by the arrival of adm. Rodney with several ships of the line from the West Indies, on the 13th of September. Whether his coming to New York was in the least under the influence of flattering prospects, upon West Point's being delivered into the hands of the British, will be matter of conjecture among many.

General Washington appointed a board of fourteen general officers (of whom were the marquis de la Fayette and baron de Steuben) with the assistance of the judge advocate general, John Laurence, [gen. M'Dougall's son-in-law] to examine into and to report a precise state of major Andre's case; and to determine what light he was to be considered in, and to what punishment he was liable. Andre disdaining all subterfuge and evasion, and studying only to place his character in so fair a light, as might prevent its being shaded by present circumstances, voluntarily confessed more than he was asked; and sought not to palliate any thing relating to himself, while he concealed, with the most guarded and scrupulous nicety, whatever might involve others. Being interrogated by the board, with respect to his conception of coming on shore under the sanction of a flag, he said with a noble frankness of mind, that if he had, he might certainly have returned under it. The board was exceedingly struck with his candor and magnanimity; and

Sept,
29.

and sufficiently showed how much they felt for his situation. They treated him with such delicacy at the opening of the examination, as to desire that he would not answer any interrogatory which would at all embarrass his feelings. Every possible mark of indulgence, and the utmost attention and politeness were exercised toward him: so that the major himself, deeply sensible of the liberality of their behaviour, declared that he flattered himself he had never been illiberal; but that if there were any remains of prejudice in his mind, his present experience must obliterate them. The board did not examine a single witness: but founded their report merely upon his own confession. In that, after a recital of a few facts, they declared, that major Andre ought to be considered as a spy from the enemy; and that, agreeable to the law and usage of nations, it is their opinion he ought to suffer death.

General Washington wrote a short answer to Sir H. Clinton's letter of the 26th, reclaiming the major, in which he stated, that though the major was under such circumstances as would have justified the most summary proceedings against him, he had referred his case to the examination and decision of a board of general officers, whose report, founded on his free and voluntary confession of his letters, was enclosed. This drew another letter from Sir Henry, who proposed to send gen. Robertson and two other gentlemen, as well to give his excellency a true state of facts, as to explain to him his own sentiments on the subject. The gentlemen were to be at Dobb's ferry on the following morning, to wait for Washington's permission and safe conduct, and to meet himself, or whoever he should appoint. He urged it

1780. as a matter of the highest moment to humanity, that the general should fully understand the whole state of the business, before he proceeded to carry the judgment of the board into execution. Gen. Greene, who had been president of it, was appointed to meet Robertson, but the others were not permitted to come on shore. Robertson used his utmost ingenuity to show, that Andre did not come within the character and description of a spy. As Greene was far from admitting either his facts or conclusions, Robertson wished that the opinions of disinterested gentlemen might be taken on the subject, and proposed Knyphausen and Rochambeau as proper persons. Humanity was the last string touched. Robertson said, he wished an intercourse of such civilities as might lessen the horrors of war; and quoted instances of Clinton's merciful disposition. He held out, that major Andre possessed a great share of that gentleman's esteem; and that he would be infinitely obliged if he was spared. He offered, if the former was admitted to return with him to New York, to engage that any person whatever, who was named, should be set at liberty. Gen. Robertson having failed in his other attempts, presented a long letter from Arnold to gen. Washington, filled with threats in case Andre should suffer, and insolently making the American commander answerable for the torrents of blood that might be spilt, in consequence of his disregarding the warning, and ordering the execution of Andre. The presentment of such a letter was considered as no less an absurdity than the writing of it.

Oct. 2. On October the 2d the tragedy was closed. The major was superior to the terrors of death: but the disgraceful mode of dying, which the usage of war had

annexed

annexed to his unhappy situation, was infinitely dreadful ¹⁷⁷⁶ to him. He was desirous of being indulged with a professional death: and accordingly had written, the day before, a pathetic letter, fraught with all the feelings of a man of sentiment and honor, in which he requested of gen. Washington, that he might not die on a gibbet. The general consulted his officers on the subject. Pity and esteem wrought so powerfully, that they were all for shooting him, till Greene insisted on it, that his crime was that of a common spy; that the public good required his being hanged; and that was he shot, the generality would think there were favorable circumstances entitling him to notice and lenity. His observations convinced them, that there would be an impropriety in granting the major's request; while tenderness prevented its being divulged. When major Andre was led out to the place of execution, as he went along he bowed himself familiarly to all those with whom he had been acquainted in his confinement. A smile of complacency expressed the serene fortitude of his mind. Upon seeing the preparations at the fatal spot, he asked with some emotion—"Must I die in this manner?" He was told it was unavoidable. He replied—"I am reconciled to my fate, but not to the mode." Soon after, recollecting himself, he added—"It will be but a momentary pang;" and springing upon the cart, performed the last offices to himself, with a composure that excited the admiration, and melted the hearts of all the spectators. Being told the final moment was at hand, and asked if he had any thing to say, he answered—"Nothing but to request that you will witness to the world, that I die like a brave man." He died universally

1730. sally esteemed and regretted. The sympathy he had excited in the American army was perhaps unexampled, under any similar circumstances.

06. General Washington thus expressed himself upon this
13. whole business in a private letter—"In no instance since the commencement of the war, has the interposition of Providence appeared more remarkably conspicuous, than in the rescue of the post and garrison of West Point. How far Arnold meant to involve me in the catastrophe of this place, does not appear by any indubitable evidence; and I am rather inclined to think, he did not wish to hazard the more important object, by attempting to combine two events, the lesser of which might have marred the greater. A combination of extraordinary circumstances, and unaccountable deprivation of presence of mind in a man of the first abilities, and the virtue of three militia men, threw the adjutant general of the British forces (with full proof of Arnold's intention) into our hands; and but for the egregious folly, or the bewildered conception of lieut. col. Jameson, who seemed lost in astonishment, and not to have known what he was doing, I should undoubtedly have gotten Arnold. Andre has met his fate, and with that fortitude which was to be expected from an accomplished man and a gallant officer; but I am mistaken if Arnold is undergoing at *this* time, the torments of a mental hell." The unhappy event of which Arnold's project was productive, the death of major Andre, deeply affected the whole royal army. Arnold was made a British brigadier general in America; and it was hoped, that with the aid of the loyalists and the discontented of

all forts, he would raise a considerable body of forces, 1780. to act under his own separate command: but neither an address of his to the inhabitants of America, nor his proclamation inscribed to the officers and soldiers of the continental army, had any effect. Notwithstanding the discontents among the American troops, through their various difficulties, Arnold's example and endeavours were so far from being the means of bringing over, even a small body or detachment, that they do not appear to have produced the desertion of a single soldier, much less of an officer.

Sir Henry Clinton in obedience to the orders sent him to prosecute the war with vigor in North Carolina and Virginia, dispatched gen. Leslie from New York to the bay of Chesapeake, with near 3000 choice troops. He was to co-operate with lord Cornwallis, who was expected to have been far advanced toward, if not to have reached Virginia. Within a few days the fleet arrived in the bay. The troops were landed in different parts of Virginia. In the beginning of November, Leslie was engaged in establishing a post at Portsmouth, till he could hear from his lordship, according to whose orders he was to act in all cases. It was sometime before he learned for a certainty where Cornwallis was: but at length instructions were received from his lordship, for the fleet and troops to proceed without delay to Charlestown. While in Virginia they possessed themselves of some tobacco and stores; but the vessels seized in the harbours and rivers were the most valuable part of the booty. About the time that Leslie landed at Portsmouth, Sir H. Clinton sent to Charlestown all the recruits belonging to the southern army, amounting to near 800, which

1780. which he reckoned would place under Cornwallis's orders full 11,306 effective rank and file, including Leslie's corps.

General Washington made a proposition to Sir H. Clinton for the exchange of a number of officers, which was not acceded to. A general exchange being what the other sincerely wished, a proposition to that purpose was returned. The British gen. Phillips, and the American gen. Lincoln, were employed for the settling of a cartel. The former supposed, that the reason why the Americans declined the exchange of privates, was an unwillingness to throw into the hands of their enemy, in the middle of an active campaign, such a reinforcement as they would receive by an exchange of all the privates. To obviate this difficulty, Phillips mentioned, that the exchange of the privates might be postponed to some future day that might be agreed on. Lincoln, on the 25th of September, expressed his desire in writing, that this might remove the objections which had existed against an exchange of privates. He wrote on October the 1st to the Massachusetts and the South Carolina delegates, and to gen. Sullivan, now one of the New Hampshire representatives in congress—"The enemy have made a proposition for a general exchange. I think policy, justice and humanity demand it on our part. I cannot but hope you will be with me in opinion: if so the proposition will have your support and interest," At length an exchange of all officers, prisoners of war, on both sides, including such as were upon their paroles in New York or in Great Britain, was settled. The exchange comprehended also an equivalent of British and German soldiers, prisoners of war, for those Americans that were

at New York. In the course of the negotiation, an in-¹⁷⁸⁰ effectual effort was made on the part of the British for the release of the privates of the convention troops.

On the 3d of November it was resolved, "That ^{Nov.} congress have a high sense of the virtuous and patriotic ^{3.} conduct of *John Paulding*, *David Williams*, and *Isaac Van Vert*: in testimony whereof, ordered, that each of them receive annually two hundred dollars in specie, or an equivalent in the current money of these states during life; and that the board of war be directed to procure for each of them a silver medal, on one side of which shall be a shield with this inscription FIDELITY, and on the other the following motto, VINCIT AMOR PATRIÆ, and forward them to the commander in chief, who is requested to present the same, with a copy of this resolution, and the thanks of congress for their fidelity, and the eminent service they have rendered their country." The next day they recommended to the several states to levy a tax equal to six millions of silver dollars, to be paid partly in specific articles, and the residue in gold or silver, or bills of credit, emitted pursuant to the resolution of the 18th of March last. On the 28th, they had before them an account of major Tallmadge of the light dragoons, having surprised and taken fort St. George on Long Island, with the garrison; they extolled the enterprise as planned and conducted with wisdom and great gallantry, and executed with intrepidity and complete success by the officers and soldiers of his detachment. Such commendations not only reward, but excite to military adventures. The major crossed the sound to the island with 80 men; left 20 to guard the boats; made a circuitous route of 20 miles

1280. miles to the fort, and reduced it almost instantly. The enemy had 8 killed and wounded. He captivated 1 lieut. colonel, 1 captain, and 55 privates; destroyed 400 tons of hay; and returned without further loss than one private wounded. Congress have at length determined upon having a permanent army. They ought before to have gotten rid of an error, which the experience of all mankind has exploded, viz. the carrying on a war with militia, or which is nearly the same, temporary levies. America has been amused almost out of her liberties. The behaviour of the militia upon one and another occasion, has been unreasonably extolled; by men who judge only from the surface, by others who had particular views in misrepresenting, and by visionary men whose credulity easily swallowed every vague story, in support of a favorite hypothesis. Some of the first generals in the American service, are ready solemnly to declare, that they never were witnesses to a single instance during this contest, that can countenance an opinion of militia or raw troops being fit for the *real business of fighting*. How little dependence can be had upon supplies by new levies, the last campaign may serve to show.

By a return on the 16th of August it appeared, that gen. Washington had received from New Hampshire to Pennsylvania inclusive, no more than 6,143; and that the deficiency within the same circuit was 10,397. Rhode Island was the least deficient in proportion to its numbers, and Pennsylvania the most. Massachusetts had in the army double the number of any other of the states north of Maryland. What few troops the general had with him, pleased him however by the rapid progress they made in military discipline.

The

The absolute necessity of a large and immediate foreign aid of money, for the continuance of the war, came at length under the serious consideration of congress. Gen. Washington was so strongly convinced of its being an object of the utmost importance, that he gave his sentiments upon it to the minister of France in the most explicit manner. The recommendations of congress for specific articles were not sufficiently operative. On the 9th of December the general said—"It is happy for us, that the season will probably compel both armies to continue in a state of inactivity, since ours is so much reduced by discharging the levies which compose a considerable part of it, even before their time of service was expired. This expedient we were forced to adopt, from the present total want of flour, and the precarious prospect of a supply of that article." Had it not been for a most vigorous step that the American gov. Clinton ventured to take, the army must have disbanded for want of bread, as the magazines were exhausted, and transportation by land was impracticable had there been any thing to act upon. The governor seized several hundred barrels in the hands of private merchants, which they had purchased up to exchange for other articles. Gen. Washington, while travelling in the neighbourhood of Pitt's Town, fell in with a parcel of cattle that were going to be slaughtered and salted. Beside being immensely poor, they were so small, that they would not average 175 lbs. the nett quarters. Some could not exceed a hundred weight, and others were mere calves. These pass by the head, and the state or states that furnish them will have the reputation of supplying that number of merchantable bullocks, when the fact is, that

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1780. next summer a starving man would scarcely eat the beef they were about to put up, after the salt had extracted the little fat and juices that were in it. The general saw about a hundred, and his information extended to about 800 more of the same kind in the neighbourhood. He directed the commissary to select the best for salting, and to let the other be eaten, as it would be a waste of salt, barrels and time, to put the same up. Many other instances of a similar imposition to what has been related might be given *.

The generous exertions of the American daughters of liberty in Philadelphia and the neighbourhood, to befriend the continental soldiers, are a perfect contrast to it. Mention was made of them in my last letter, p. 376. Their donations purchased a sufficient quantity of cloth, and their hands made the same into two thousand one hundred and seven shirts, which were delivered to the person appointed to receive them by gen. Washington. Pennsylvania furnished the whole quantity, except seventy-seven, which were the produce of the Jerseys. The daughters of this last state made a further present of three hundred and eighty pair of stockings †.

The board of loyal refugees at New York have for many months back possessed something like a fleet of small privateers and cruisers; by the aid of which they have committed various depredations, and great excesses in different places, from peculiar personal animosity; and thereby have irritated their adversaries to retaliate in like manner. Thus the feelings of humanity have been suspended on both sides; scenes of waste and havock

* The general's letter of Dec. 26, 1780.
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have followed; and a predatory war been carried on, ¹⁷⁸⁰ tending neither to subjugation nor reconciliation, but the reverse. While these have been the operations upon the maritime coasts of the continent, the back settlements and inland frontiers have been ravaged by the inimical Indians, their tory associates, and a number of British regulars. The New York state suffered the most, by parties under major Carleton, Sir John Johnson, and capt. Brandt. In the beginning of August, they burnt more than 50 houses and 47 barns, the principal part of Canijohary, a fine settlement about 56 miles from Albany. They destroyed 27 houses at Schoharie; and at Norman's Creek 20. In October their irruptions were renewed. Stone Arabia and Canaghstota were attacked, and Schoharie afresh; and a great extent of country about the Mohawk river was laid waste. A number of the settlers were killed and more made prisoners. Sir John Johnson was obliged to fight them repeatedly; but was careful, Indian like, not to stay long enough in any one place, to admit of his enemy's collecting a sufficient force to bring on a decisive action. My next will most probably contain an account of depredations in another quarter, as gen. Arnold sailed from Sandy Hook on the 21st of December, with a body of troops under his command on an expedition.

October the 5th, the Massachusetts general court adjourned. The last act they passed was—"An act to incorporate an academy in the town of Andover, by the name of *Phillips's academy*." No business requiring another meeting, they ceased of course. The Wednesday three weeks, the 25th of that month, was the day appointed for the general election agreeable to the new con-

1780. stitution. It was ushered in by the ringing of bells, firing of cannon, and other demonstrations of the public rejoicing. When the two houses were formed, a committee was appointed to examine the returns of the several towns for a governor, though it was before known on whom the choice had fallen. They reported that his excellency John Hancock esq; was elected governor by a great majority of votes. A committee of both houses waited upon him to inform him of it, and request his attendance at the council chamber. After he had gone through all the formalities required to qualify him for his office, the secretary, from the balcony of the state-house, declared, to the attending crowds in the street, his excellency John Hancock esq; governor of the Massachusetts's commonwealth, which was repeated by the sheriff of the county of Suffolk. A grand feu de joie was given by the militia companies. Thirteen cannon were fired by the artillery, and three vollies by the independent company. The cannon at the Castle and Fort Hill, and on board the shipping in the harbour were fired upon the occasion. The governor, senate and house of representatives, then attended divine service, agreeable to ancient established custom, at the Old Brick Meeting-house. The Rev. Dr. Samuel Cooper delivered a suitable and acceptable discourse from the following words in the 30th of Jeremiah—"And their congregation shall be established; and their nobles shall be of themselves; and their governor shall proceed out of the midst of them." When service was finished, they proceeded to Faneuil-hall, amidst a great concourse of people, where an elegant entertainment was provided, and a large number of respectable gentlemen of all or-

ders assembled. In the course of the convivial meeting, thirteen toasts were drank, each being accompanied with the firing of a cannon. No gentleman being elected lieutenant governor by the majority of the people, the senate and house on the 30th, made choice of James Bowdoin esq; who declined the honor partly on account of his not being chosen by the votes of the freemen, but chiefly because of his continued ill state of health. The next person fixed upon was the president of the council, Thomas Cushing esq; who accepted.

On the 18th of December died at Newport, his excellency Charles Louis De Ternay, knight of St. John of Jerusalem, late governor of the islands of France and Bourbon, and chief commander of the French squadron in the American seas. His remains were the next day interred in Trinity church-yard of said town, attended with military honors.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

E R R A T A.

Page 64, line 22, *read* himself, P. 75, l. 28, *read* have. P. 167, l. 2, *read* and endeavoured. P. 227, l. 26, *read* October. P. 295, l. 11, *read* the British admirals. P. 306, l. 11, *read* distance from.

was assembled. In the course of the convivial meet-
 ing, thirteen toasts were drank, each being accompanied
 with the firing of a cannon. The gentleman being elected
 as toast-giver by the majority of the people, the
 name and being on the spot, made choice of James
 Bowdoin esq; who declined the honor partly on account
 of his not being chosen by the votes of the assembly,
 but chiefly because of his continued ill state of health.
 The next person then upon was the president of the
 council, Thomas Cushing esq; who accepted.

On the 28th of December 1780, his ex-
 cellency Charles Cornwallis knight of St. John
 of Jerusalem, late Governor of the island of France and
 Bouchon, and chief of the French squadron
 in the American sea, was the next day
 invited to Trinity church-yard of this town, attended
 with military honors.



AND OTHER LAND VOLUNTARIES

E R A T A.
 Page 61, line 22, read "Blaque".
 "2, now read "Blaque".
 "11, read "the British admiral".